

¶ Here begynneth the Rule of seynt Benet.







Districte as every pson ought to knowe
the thyng that he is bounde to kepe accomplishe
and ignorance of the thyngs that he
is bounde to do / cannot nor may not excuse
him / and for so moche also / as the redyng of
the thyngs that a persone is bounde to do &
execute / except he vnderstande it / is to the executinge ther
of no thyng vailiabe / but only thyng iutile / trauell in vayne
and tyme loste. We therefore Richard by the permissi
on and suffraunce of our lord god Bisshope of Winchester /
resoluinge in our mynde / that certayne deuoute and religi
ouse womē bringe / within our Diocese & vnder our pasto
rall charge and cure / haue not only professed them to thob
seruance of the Rule of the holy cōfessoure Seinte Benet /
but also be bounde to rede / lerne / and vnderstand the same
when they be Nounices / & before they be professed / And also
after their profession they shulde nat onely in them selfe ke
pe / obserue / execute / and practise the sayd rule / but also teche
other their sisters the same / i so moche / that for the same in
tente / they daily rede / & cause to be red some pte of the sayd
Rule by one of the sayd sisters / amonges the selfe / as well in
their Chapterhouse after the redyng of the Martyrologe /
as some tyme in their frater / in tyme of refectiōs and col
laciōs / al the which redyng is alwayes don i the latin tōge /
wherof they haue no knowlege nor vnderstōdunge / but be
vtterly ignorant of the same / whereby they do nat only lese
their tyme / but also runne i to the euident daunger & perill of
the pdition of their soules. We the sayd Bisshope knowing
and consideringe the premisses / and rememberyng / that we
may not without like peryll of our soules / suffer the sayd re
ligious women / of whose soules we haue the cure : to con
tinue in their sayde blindenesse / and ignorance of the sayd
Rule / to the knowlege and obseruance wherof they be pro
fessed / & specially to the intent / that the yonge Nounices may
first knowe and vnderstande the sayde Rule before they pro
fesse the to it / So that none of them shall mooue after ward
24.

probably say/that the wyllie hat what the professed / as we
kno we by experieñce/that some of them haue sayd in tyme
passed. for these causes / and specially at the instant requeste
of our ryght dere and welbeloued daughters in our lord
Jhu/ Chabballes of the monasteris of Aunslay/wharwel/
Seynt Maries within the citie of Manchester / and the pri
orisse of Wintnay: our right religious diocesans/ we haue
translated: the sayde rule into our moders tonge/ comune/
playne/rounde englische / easy / and redy to be vnderstande
by the sayde deuoute religiousse women / And by cause we
wolde not/that there shulde be any lacke amongis them of
the bokis of this sayd translation/we haue therfore/ a boue
and besyde certayne bokes therof/which we haue yeuē to
the sayde monasteris: caused it to be enyprinted by our wel
beloued Richarde Pynson of London yster. The. xii. day
of the Monethe of January. The yere of our Lorde. M.
CCCC. xvi. And the. viii. yere of the Reigne of our soue
rayne lord kynge Henry the. viii. and of our translatiō the
xvi.

The rule of seynt Benet.



In the name of the Trinite/ here
enfueth the plogue of the rule of the
blacke monks & minchins / made by
the moost religious fader seynt Be-
net / whiche in the begynnynge of the
sayde prologue sayth thus.



Ere and make well my
childre / the preceptes and
comaundementes of oure
fader & master / & diligent-
ly apply & indyne the inwarde spiri-
tuall eres of youre hertes / and gladly perceyue and admitte
the frutefull admonicions of your good & louinge fader / And
effectually accomplishe and fullfyll the same / so that by the
laboure and vertu of obedience: ye may reforme and come a-
gayne to all myghty god / from whome ye were departed: &
disseuered thurgh Idelnesse / vice / and disobedience. Unto
you all therfore / my wordes be now directed and spoken /
what so euer ye be: that wyl forsake and renounce youre
owne wylles / sensualytes / and pleasures / and take vppon
you the myghty and noble spirituall armure of obedience /
to doo seruice to that noble and verie true kynge / almyghty
god Iesu christe. And firste what so euer goode purpose
or werke ye begyn to take vppon you / ye shall before ye be-
gynne it / aske and moste instantly desyre the goode lord to
performe and make perfect your sayde purpose or werke /
that he whiche hathe vouchsafed to accepte vs / as in the
number of his chosen children / be not at any season moued /
displeased / or greued / thurgh our euill offences & misdedes.
For at all seasones / we ought for the great goodnesse that
he hath shewed vnto vs / so to bowe & obey vnto him / lesse
that he as a displeased fader: for our demerites / not only dis-
inheryte vs as his vnhynde children / but also as a ferefull
lord & mayster: poked by our euill dedes / cōdemne vs as
frowarde and vnhynde seruantes to perpetuall paynes / by

cause we dyde not our diligence to follo we him to euerlast-
tinge glorie. ¶ Therefore now we at the laste / let hit arryse ho-
ly scripture exciting vs with these wordes / Tyme is now
that we arise fro slepe / & that we open our yes : to the clere
lyght of allmyghty god / so that we may pceyue & here with
attentye crys / what dayly is comaunded vs by the worde
of god saynge thus. ¶ If ye this day haue harde the worde
of almyghty god / be ye not harde nor stobborne / nor stoppe
not the crys of your herte. And also he saith agayne / he that
hath crys to here : let him here what the holy goost sayth to
all cristen people / But what sayth he : Come ye my chudren
and here me / I shall teche you to drede god / Kenne ye and be
diligent : whyles the lyght of lyfe is amonges you / lesse the
derkenes of deth catche you / Also all myghty god / seying his
saythfull people & obedient seruantes & workemen : amon-
ges the multytude of his people / not only cryethe after the
maner a forsayd / but also he sayth & demaundeth in this wy-
se / what man is he that wyll haue euerlastinge lyfe / and de-
syreth to see good dayes : And if thou heryng these wordes
woll answer & say / I am he . allmyghty god then sayth to
the ageyne. If thou wol haue trewe & euerlastinge lyfe : with
dra we & kepe thy tonge from all euyl / and suffer no fraude
ne distayte passe thurgh thy hyppes / turne the from all euyl /
& doo that is goode / seke out & pursue pear / & folowe the sa-
me. And whē ye do after this maner sayth allmyghty god /
then shall myne yes be open & fixed vppon you / & myne crys
allway redy to your prayers & petitions / & before ye shall call
vppō me I shall puent you / & shall say / lo we here I am / redy
to youre desyres. ¶ O dere susters (sayth seynt Benet) what
thyng may be to vs swetter then this voyce of our sauour :
in the maner a forsayd / callynge vs to him. Be holde susters
(sayth seint Benet) With almyghty god of his owne kynde-
nes / pitie / & mere mercie / byfore we aske it : sheweth to vs the
way of lyfe / let vs therefore array / & excercyse our selue in the
sayth / and in the obseruāce of good workes / & let vs take vpp-
on vs : the Journey of allmyghty god / folowinge the lawe &

ledinge of his gosple/that we may deserue to see him in his
kyngdome of heuen / whiche hath thus called vs to him by
his grace. In which kyngdom/ if we intēde to haue a resting
ge place/ we must diligently inforse and indeuor our selfe to
labor in good workes/ without the which the sayd resting
place & kyngdome / can not be attayned. ¶ But then aske
we all myghty god with the prophete saynge thus. Goode
lorde who shall dwell in thy heuenly kyngdome and place/
or who shall make his resting place in thy holy mounte of
heuen. After this interrogacion. Dere sisters (saythe seyne
Benet) let vs here our lorde answeringe: and shewinge to
vs the ryght way to his heuenly mansion. ¶ He (almighty
god saythe) shall dwell in my heuenly howse / that lyueth
without spot of synne and dothe ryghtfull werkes. He that
thinkes truly in his hart/ and worketh no desseyte with his
tonge/ he that hath doone none euill to his neyghbor: nor
enterprysed none obprobriouse sclaunderouse / nor shamefull
thinge to the hurte of his neyghbor. He that dispiseth & put-
teth out of his hart. our mortall foe the cursed fende/ and ha-
th vtterly brought him to nought/ with all his suggestions
temptacions/ and entisinges / & hath brokyn & resisted them
at the firste monicion of them / and stedfastly holden his in-
warde thoughtes vnto chryste. they that brede god & extoll
not theym selfe/ ne be proude of their good religiose dedes/
but supposinge and thinkinge verely the goodnes which is
in them / not to be of them selfe/ but of the gyfte of god: doo
laude/ and magnify god for his graciose operacion i them/
saing with the pphete thus. Not to vs good lord/ not to vs/
but to thy holy name gyue thou prayle & glory/ as thapostell
Paule whiche dyd not impute any parte of his pching & te-
chinge to hi selfe / but sayd. By the grace of god & not of my
selfe/ I am as I am. & ageyne he saythe. He that ioyleth or se-
keth any laude or glory/ let hi ioie i god/ & gyue laude & glory
to hi. wherof our lord spekethe thus i his gospell / who so be-
reth these my wordes/ & doth the same in dede: I shall lyken
hi to a wyse man that hath bulded his howse vppon a rocke.

there can bytter stormes/both waters & wynd/ & brass to
the howse/ & yet it fell not downe/ why: for it was builded
vppon a stedfaste stone. ¶ Oure lord whiche dyd accom-
plishe & perfourme all these poyntes and condicions in his
owne persone/lokeþ dayly that we shall make good/and
by oure werkes satisfie and conforme vs to these his ho-
ly monitions/ And therfore the dayes of this present lyfe be
prolongued vnto vs and prologued as a daye of trewe/ for
the amendinge of oure shrewde dedes/ the apostell saynge
thus. Can thou nat tell man/that the longanimitie/pacience
and longe sufferance of almyghty god /is to induce and ex-
cyte the to repentance penance and reformation: for oure
lord saith of his great mercy and pitie / I will not the deth
of a synner / but I desyre that he be conuerted and ameded/
and lyue. ¶ Nowe dere susters (saith seint Benet) whā we
asked our sauoure of the dwellers and inhabitantes of his
holly and heuently mācion/we harde by and by/his precepts
howe we myght attayne to it / & to deserue to dwell in it.
And if we doo the office of trewe inhabitantis / we shall be
inheritours of the kyngdome of heuē. ¶ Therfore dere sisters
(sayth seynt Benet) ye muste make redy youre hartes/and
your bodies to obey the preceptes and cōmaundementes of
our rule/by vertu of obedience/ And where thurgh the fra-
gilite of nature / and the infirmite of our selfe we be insuffi-
cient and vnhabile so to do/we shall beseeche all myghty god
that his grace may be to vs / ayde & socoure in that behalfe/
And if we woll escheue the paynes of hell / & come to euer-
lastinge lyfe/let vs then whiles we haue tyme and layfoure:
and whiles we in this our mortall body lyue: and may ful-
fyll by the lyght of this present lyfe/all these forsayde preptes:
diligently ren and labor/ & so good workes do nowe / that they
may profyte vs in tyme to come. ¶ Wherfore (sayth seynt
Benet) we muste nowe orden a schole of the seruice of al-
myghty god/that is to say this present rule/ the whiche ordi-
nāce (sayth seynt Benet) we trust to put nothyng that hard
is/sharpe/or greuous/Albeit/if any maner of thyng for any

reasonable cause passe by our sayd schole & ordinance for the
redressinge of defaultes and for the obseruation of charite /
the whiche thou shalt thinke rigorouse or straite / thou
shaltnot therfore be sodenly afrayde / and for fere at a chop
flee and forsake the waye of euerlastinge lyfe / seinge that it
cannot be entred: but with a harde & a straict begynninge /
for in proces of tyme / & by cōtinuance of good cōuersacion /
the way of the cōmandement of almyghty god / is by ther
cellent swetnesse of his loue / & with glad hart / easely & ioy
fully walkyd / And so this schole of saynte Benet / is ordey
ned to thentēt that we neuer departinge from christis in
structions & pceptis / but alwaye pserueringe in his doctrine
in monasteris: tyll dethe come vppen vs / thurgh pacience
and tribulations / beare so in vs parte of his passion / that fy
nally we may deserue to be cytezens of his kyngedom of
heuy.

**There beginneth the rule of our
hoiy fader seynt Benet.**

**The first chapiter treateth of.iiii.
maner of monkes.**

It is manifeste: that there be.iiii. diuerse kyndis or sec
tes of monkes. The first is of Cenobitis / that is to
say of monasteriall persons / seruing god to gedder or in cō
gregaciō in monasteris / vnder oon rule: & oon abbot or oon
prior / And of this secte or kynde be mynchins seruinge to
gedder in monasteris vnder oon rule / and oon abbasse or oon
prioresse. The seconde maner or secte is / of Anachorits &
Eremitis that is to say / of the which not as sone as they haue
takyn religiō vppen the / but by longe cōtinuāce & proufe i
monasteris / haue lerned / and had experience thurgh the cō
forte of other / to fyght ageynste the suggestions & tempta
cions of the deuyl / And so well they be armed and instructed

by the good counsell of other / that they may suerly take vpon
pon them / and be hable to fyght sole and solitardy : thurgh
the helpe of all myghty god / without the comfort of other :
agaynste the temptacions of the fleische / & agaynste all oðer
euill thoughtes. ¶ The .iii. kynde / maner / oꝛ secte / is of Sa-
rabites / a secte detestable : whiche lyue not vnder obedience
of any supioꝛ / ne vnder any rule that is good & approued /
noꝛ be tried in monasteries : as golde is by the furnace / but be
more lyke vnto ledde / supple & pleyable to all viciis / And say-
ming the selfe to be religiose / vnder the simulate habite / & to
sure of religiose men / be in all their dedes : wayne / ydell / and
wordly / whiche by .ii. to gedde / oꝛ .iii. to gedder / oꝛ elles by
oon a lone / lede their lyues : without hed oꝛ supioꝛ / noꝛ in ab-
bayes oꝛ monasteries / but where they luste / folowinge their
owne appetites and desyres / and takynge vpon twofolde
ther lawe & reule . for what so euer they cōiect / oꝛ choyle af-
ter their owne mynd / to be good / that they cal holy . & what
is not aggreable to their appetitis / be it neuer so good / de-
de / they say it is not lawfull . ¶ The .iiii. kynde oꝛ secte is of
those that be vagabundes / that ren from pynce to prouince /
from Cell to cell / abyding not in oon place passing .iii. oꝛ .iiii.
dayes / euer wāderinge / and neuer stable / gyuing them selfe
to glotony & other lustes of the fleische / and in all their dedes
be worse then the Sarabitis . Of whose moste wretched
conuerfacion : better it is not to medle then to speke of them .
wherefore (sayth seynt Bernard) omittynge and ouerpassynge
them / let vs thurgh the helpe & succurre of all myghty god /
extende to let an ordynance and to make a rule / concernynge
those monasteriall and religiose persons / of whome we speake
of firste / that is to say of the Cenebitis .

¶ The seconde chapter treateth of what qualites
an Abbasse ought to be .

Abbasse that may be habile & worthy to take vppō
hir the Rule & gouernance of a monastery or congregacion
must all wey call to hir remembrance & cōsider the
name of the dignite that she is called by / and labour effectually
that hir dedes be accordinge to hir name / and in no
thinge contrary to the dignite that she is called to / for she oc-
cupieth the place of almyghty god: in the monastery / in so-
moche as she is named after hym / thapostle sainge thus. ye
haue receyued the holy goste: by whom ye be made the chil-
dren of god / in whom we cry all togeder to almyghty god /
& call hi Abba pat / that is to say fader / of the whiche name
all abbottes & abbasses take their names: thabbot to be to
his couēt a fader / & thabbasse a moder / And therefore the ab-
basse shall nothyng ordeyne / teche / ne cōmaūde (as god for-
bode she shulde) contrary to the cōmaundementes of all
myghty god / whos ro'ome & authorize she hath & occupi-
eth / but hir cōmaundemēt / & doctrines must be in suche wi-
se ordered & verred: that they may take place / and effectually
worke in the myndes of hir sisters & disciples / like vnto the
sweetnes and sauour of the ryghtwylnes of all myghty god.
¶ Thabbasse must alway haue i hir mynde / that of hir doc-
trine & of the obediēce of hir sisters & disciples / & of eyther of
thē to gedre / that is to saye as well of hir doctrine as of their
obediēce: there shalbe a strayte examinaciō & triall made in
the fereful day of the last iugemēt. ¶ Thabbasse must knowe
also / that what so euer damage / incommodite / lacke of frui-
te or vtilite / our lord findith in his shepe: that is to say in the
couēt / it shalbe layde & imputed to the charge / blame / & de-
faute of the sheparde / that is to say of thabbasse / Albe it she
may therof discharge & acquite hir selfe by this meane & by
none other / that is to say / if so be that she haue don hir dūge
ce to the trewblouse & obstinate flocke / & that with all hir la-
bour she hath endeouored hir selfe to the amēdemēt of the
pre euyl dedes: than may she well for hir discharg & acquitall
at the day of doome / say to almyghty god with the pphet I
haue not hyd ne kepte within my brest thy iustice nor righ-

tuines I haue shewed & declared to them thy treweth: I
haue declared thy holsome commaundementes/and they
despisinge them: haue set my wordes & doctrine at nought.
and then in exclusion/everlastinge dethe shalbe their reward
and punishment/ worthy and conuenient to suche an obsti-
nate and disobedient floche: not considering nor regarding
their dutie as they ought to haue done. ¶ Therefore whē so
euer any oon takithe vppon hit the name of an Abbasse/ she
must Rule and gouerne hir disciples by two maner of doc-
trines/ that is to say/ she muste shewe vnto them good and
holy thynges by hir wordes and doctrine/ and more largely
by example of hir dedes/ so that to them whiche haue capa-
cite of wit to vnderstonde/ she muste teche and declare the
comaundementes of almyghty god in wordes and doctri-
nes/ and to other that be dullardes/ harde wytted/ & more
symple of vnderstandinge/ she muste more openly and lar-
gely shewe and teche the comaundementes of almyghty
god by hir owne dedes/ for all those thynges which she for-
bedith hir disciples by hir wordes/ she muste by hir owne
dedes shewe/ that they ought not to be don/ lesse that she p-
chunge and techinge other: befounde repprouable in hir selfe
and lesse that god for suche hir synnes and offences: say vnto
hit in this wyse. why doest thou teche my ryghtuines/ and
why takes thou vppō the to vtter the wordes of my lawes
and testamēt thorough thy mouth. Thou haste by thy dedes
hated my doctrine: and caste far from the: my wordes and
comaundementes. And thou Abbasse whiche haste espyed
a lyttell mote in the Iye of thy sister: haste not seene a great
blocke in thyne owne Iye. ¶ The Abbasse shall nother put
nor make any difference by twene person and person in the
monastery/ nether she shall bere more loue to one then to a
nother/ Excepte only to suche/ as she fyndeth better then o-
ther in good dedes/ in the obseruance of the Religion/ in the
seruice of god/ & in lowly obediēce. She that com of higher
or noble linage or of a free kynrede: shall not be pferred in or-
der of stōdinge: or vnto office/ by fore a nother of lo wer byr-

the or of a bonde stocke/except there be som other resonable
cause then their byrth / as excellence in any maner of vertue
and lerninge requiringe it/ and if any suche cause resonable
be/ the the abbasse accordyng to their merites & aptnes may
fauor/ dispose order / & preferre/ in standinge or other wyse /
as she shall thynke ryght to requier/ not withstandinge there
diuerlite and condicion of byrth or any suche other thinge /
or ellſ lat them kepe their place and order . for be she bonde/
be she fre/ be she of noble/ or ignoble blode / and lynage/ all be
oon in our lordē Jhu chiste / and vnder oon lordē dothe bere
equall borden of seruyce . for god takith no consyderacion
ne regarde to the persone / but to the vertuose workes and
merites . And maketh only difference by twyxe those per-
sons that he fyndeth more obedient and better than other
in good workes . Therefore the loue & fauor of thabbſſe muſte
be indifferent and equall vnto all hir ſuſters / And also oon
discipline and correction muſt she gyue vnto them all after
their offences/ defect/ & demerites in hir doctrine / she muſte
kepe the maner & forme of thapoſtel where he ſayth/ blame
them/ exhorſte them/ & rebuke them/ that is to ſay/ be it tyme
of correction or of prayſe & cōmēdation / she muſt euer med-
le with terroꝝ blandiſhementes / & with ſharpenesse / ſweet-
neſſe / she muſte ſhe we the ſharpe mynde and auctorite of a
mayſtreſſe / and the louing afeccion and tendꝛenes of a mo-
der/ that is to ſay/ she muſt ſharply blame and to woghly re-
buke wyllfull vntuly rude and comboꝝous pſons / and ſu-
che as be obedient/ meke/ patient/ & ſofte perſons / she muſte
in louinge maner exhorſte and deſyre them to encrece dayly
more and more in their vertuiſnes/ fro good to better . And
ſuche as be veray negligent obſtinate & rebellioſe / we woll
& cōmaūde that the abbasse not only ſharply rebuke them /
but also effectually puniſhe & correcte them . Also the ab-
basse may not diſimyll / cloke / ne hyde the faultes or offen-
ſes of them that doth a myſſe / but as ſone as the faultes be-
gynne to ſpꝛynge / she ſhall to the vttermoſte of hir power /

plucke them vp hard by the rotes/hauyng alway in mynde
the ioperoye of hely the preest and minifter of god in **S**chole/
whiche for the negligent correction of his children/by the
stroke of god fell and brake his necke. And ſuche perſons
as be of more honeſtie better capacite and vnderſtandinge/
ſhe ſhall warne & correct oons or twyle by wordes of mouth
but ſuche as be yeuē to vices and be hard harted/provde/
and diſobedient/ſhe ſhall puniſhe at the firſte offence ether
with rodde/or with other chaſtiſement of the bodye/after
hir diſcretion/according to that: that is wrytten/a ſole canne
neuer be amended nor corrected by wordes. And ageyne pu
niſche thy ſonne with a rodde/and thou ſhalt deliuer his
ſoule from euerlaſtinge dethe/the abbaſſe muſt alway re
membze bothe hir owne frayle nature/and alſo conſyde
the name of a moder: that ſhe is called by/and ryght well
knowe/that to whome a gretter charge is comitted of him
or hir/ſo moche the more frute is demaunded and required.
She muſte vnderſtande alſo howe harde/and labourouſe
a thyng ſhe hath vndertake/that is to ſay to gouerne ſo
les/and to be haue hir ſelfe comodiouſely in hir cures/acco
dyng to the diuerſite of maners & condicions of a multitu
de of perſons/for ſome ſhe muſt conquere with ſayze wo
des/ſome with rebuk/ſome with good reaſons and exhor
tacons/pea. and aſtur the behauoure and capacite of eue
ry perſon/ſhe muſte ſo ſhape and confourme hir ſelfe to the
m all/and euer/oon of them/that not oonly ſhe ſhal not ſuffer
any damage or appeyringe of hir flocke comitted vnto hir/
but ſhe ſhall ſo orde hir/that ſhe may haue cauſe greatly to
reioyſe for thenceaſe of the numbze & goodnes of hir ſayde
flocke. And byfore all thynges ſhe muſt be well ware that
ſhe doo not diſſimull or lyttell regard the welth of ſo
les/committed vnto hir/ſettinge more hir mynde vpon
thynges terreſtriall and traſitory/as woꝝkes temperall and
woꝝdlye matires/ but ſhe muſt alwaye remembze/that ſhe
haſte take vpon hir the gouernance of chriſten ſo
les/of the whiche

che she shall make accomptis: And to remember that she by the
pardon of the poenitenc and necessity of the monastery shall
not have any apparant of p[ro]vision to be busy and to
leave aboutes w[ith] any goodes takynge the lesse becom to the
spiritual & godly service: let her remember that it is w[ro]t
tyn. It is the sence to be all your force & diligence to pursue
the kingdome of god and his will by ryght w[ise] service/
workes and doing to god and all thynges necessary shalbe
provided for you by almyghty god without your great la-
bour and study and nothyng shall you lacke. And a gayne
he sayth nothyng is lackyng to them that drede and serve
god. ¶ The abbasse muste knowe well also that she / that
hath taken upon her to guyde so woles must be all wey reby
to guyde and make accomptes of theym. And howe so euer
greate the numbre of the sisters vnder her cure be / lette her
knowe for certeyn that at the day of iugement she shall an-
swere for the soules of every oon of them and for hir owne
also and thus the abbasse euer havyng by fore hir yes and
continually fering the strypte examinacio of the maister she
perch / to wchinge his flocke of shepe comitted to her charge
when she is so wate & ferefull of the accomptis & rekenyng
that she muste make for other / she cannot but diligently &
warely remember hir owne selfe. And whyles thurgh her
good exhortacions & monicions she ministrerth socour and
ameddment to other she cannot be but thereby amedid her self.

¶ The.iii. chapter treateth howe and when the
abbasse shall aske counsell of her sisters.

As often as any matters of greate weyght and sub-
stance be to be treated and spoke of in the monastery
the abbasse must call the hole couent into the chapterhouse
or into some other place convenient and there must she her
selfe declare vnto them what the mater is that is to be trea-
ted of: & when she hath herde the mynde & counsell of every

oon of her sisters / she shall then take deliberacion and coun-
seyll with hir seaffe / and what thinge she ingeth moze pro-
fitable to be done: that shall she doo. And for this cause we
haue comaunded (sayth seynt benet) that all be called to coun-
sayll / for often tymes to the ponge person god geueth reue-
lacion what thyng is beste to be doone. And the sisters
shall soo behaue theym in prouinge their counsaile with all
lowlynesse and humilite / that they presume not obstinately
and proudly to defende their owne opinion / or mayntaigne
that thing / which after their mynde they thought best / but
rather lett it hange: and remayne in the arbytriment and
Iugement of the abbasse / so that what so euer she thynke
best to be doon / all they therein doo obey vnto hir. But as
it is conuenient for a disciple to obey hir mastresse / eyn son
if doth becom the mastresse to dispose all thyng wysely &
ryghtly. And therefore i every thinge as well the abbasse
as the couent / indifferently ought to followe their mastresse /
that is to say their rule / whiche is their very mastresse / ney-
ther any oon of them / ne the abbasse no: other / shall folpyll be
hardy no: without gret cōsideraciō or weyghty cause / wate-
ue from it / but firmly & fastly holde them there to. And soon
i the monastery shall followe their owne wyll / neyther any
shall presume forwardly to stryue with the abbasse eyther
within the monastery or without / and if any oon presume
so to doo / lett hir be put to reguler discipline & correction ac-
cordingly / And yet the abbasse shall in all hir werkes / iuge-
mentes & gouernāces / haue byfore hir yes the drede of god /
and euer regarde the obseruātes & statutes of hir rule / being
well assured & in no wyse dobtynge / that of all hir iugemēt
she shall geue an accomptes byfore the moſte equall iuge all
myghty god. But if there be to be done any maters to
chunge a smaller substance / cōcerninge the welthe & yfite of
the monastery / the abbasse shall then counseyle oonly with
the hed offycers / and suche seniors: as hath ben of long con-
tinuance and experience in the monastery accorɔyng as it

wreten. Doo all thinge with counsell / and then thou shalt
not afterwarde repente nor be sorow of thy dedde.

**The.iiii. chapter treateth of the
instrumentes of good workes**

Like as all worldely artificers haue matervall instru-
mentes apte for the accomplisshemēt of their worl-
dely werkes / in lyke wyse there be instrumentes spirituall /
for the crafte of religiouse lyuinge / by the whiche religiouse
persons / bothe in this p̄sent lyfe / may honestly & after the
pleasure of god be directed / composed / & ordred / & also after
the same lyfe / they may blessedly reigne with christ i heuē.

The firste of these instrumentes is / that ye loue your lord
god with all your hart / that is to saye / applyenge all your
thoughtes oonly to him / and with all your mynde / that is
to say applyenge all your studies / wittes and dilectacions
oonly to hi / & with all your myght / that is to say applyenge
all your bodie strenght and powars oonly to his seruyce.

The secōde is that ye loue your neyghbour as your selfe /
wherby it apperith that ye shall after god / loue your selfe /
and then your neyghboꝝ as your selfe.

The.iii. is that ye sle no person / that is to say / bodely nor
gostly with hande nor tonge / And specially thou shalt not
slee thyne owne soule by any deedly synne.

The.iiii. is that ye breke not your chastite / that is to saye /
that ye doo no maner of aduoutrye / fornicacion / incōtinē-
cie nor any other synne or viciousshe of the flesche / & in lyke
wyse ye shall doo noo spirituall fornicaciō / that is to say / ye
shall worship no false godd / nor loue inordinatly your selfe
nor any other earthly creature.

The.v. is that ye doo no thefte / that is to say / ye shall not
take nor vse the goodd of an other fraudulety / nor without
the owners wyll lycence or assēt / nor that ye religiouse sisters
take / receyue / or kepe any thyng / without the certeyne
knowlege & speciall graunt or licence of the abbasse. In lyke
wyse ye shal not withdraue any seruice that ye owe oonly

to god / and doo it to the deuill. and if ye doo / ye haue cheft.

CThe. vi. is that ye conceyt not / that is to say / that ye neither conceyt / whyll be / nor desyre any person wherewith to doo carnally any syn / nor conceyt any manes good / fraudulently / nor assent to any suche desyre of the fleithe or good / nor yet inordinatly desyre auctorite or honor.

CThe. vii. is that ye shall not bere ye save any false witness wherby it is also prohybte makynge of leasynge / or false or wrongfull tales / and brykynge of any promyse or vowe.

CThe. viii. is ye shall of youre humylite do reuerence to all people wherem is iplied that ye shall thynke & aduige every person beter then your selfe.

CThe. ix. is ye shall not do to another / that ye wolde not shulde be doone to your selfe.

CThe. x. is that ye shall for sake your selfe: that is to say your luste / pleasure / wyll / sensualite / & concupiscence to thentet ye may i all your thowghtes / word / & werk / folowe christe & serue hi.

CThe. xi. is that ye shall chastise your body / that is to say / with resonable abstinence watche prayer & discipline.

CThe. xii. is that ye loue not delicate pleasure / that is to say / that ye delyte not in delicate & pleasant metes & drinkes / sightes or any other thing / of the worlde / nor any suche delectacions folowe nor the loue.

CThe. xiii. is that ye inwardly loue / fastinges / abstinence / temperans / and sobernes.

CThe. xiiii. is that ye refreshe the pore people / that is to say / ye shall socoure them after your power / with clothyng / logynge / mete / drinke / counsaile / comfort / and visitacion. And all be it that these & the other workes of charyte that folowe cannot be actually performed in religiose persons / except in suche a person as hath the thoffice of thosteler or ospitler / yet every other religiose person may do it in good wyll / mynde / intent / counsaile / and comfort / yeuynge to them that may do it / and in forbeyng sum what of their mete and drinke / to thentet the pore people may the more largely haue parte therof / They may also refreshe / visite / comfort / bury / & helpe their owne susters.

CThe. xv. is that ye clothe the naked.

CThe. xvi. is that ye dyslite the seke. **C**The. xvii. is that ye bury the deed. **C**The. xviii. is that ye socour them that be in tribulacion & aduersite. **C**The. xix. is that ye cōfort them that be full of thought or sorowe. **C**The. xx. is that ye medle not nor talke/speke/nor cōmune/in worde/werke/or deed of any wordly maters or busines / but them vtterly & extrenely refuse and renounce so that in all your affections ye be vtterly alienate from the worlde. **C**The. xxi. is that in your lyuinge ye prefer nothyng aboute the loue of chryste. **C**The. xxii. is that ye be neuer thurghly nor lōge angry / & if it fortune you to be angry / that then ye execute not your yre or anger / nor to do that thyng that your yre moueth you to. **C**The. xxiii. is that ye bere no malyce longe in your mynde / thynkyng in tyme to wreke your angre / or to auenge you. **C**The. xxiiii. is that ye thinke not nor kepe any dissayte / or fraude in your hart. **C**The. xxv. is that ye vse no simulatiō / nor dissimulacion / ne yeue no Judas kyss / but when ye make any praxe or louedaye / or elles reconcyle youre selfe with any person / that then ye doo it as well & truly in your harte and dede / as in worde / and outwarde countenance. **C**The. xxvi. is that ye kepe you alwayes within the bound of charite / & neuer to forsake or be without loue and charite. **C**The. xxvii. is that ye swere not at all / nor in any maner of wyle / and that for drede of fallynge into piury or into custurable sweringe. **C**The. xxviii. is that when ye speke / ye speke the trwth all way both with harte and mouth. **C**The. xxix. is that for oon euyl to me ye / doo nat a nother. **C**The. xxx. is that ye doo no wronge / and if any be doon to you / that ye suffre and take it patiently. **C**The. xxxi. is that ye loue your enemies / that is to say that ye shewe humilite to your enemies for goddes sake / both by your prayers and also by releuyng them in their necessities / cōsyderinge that chryste both loued you & by his deeth redenued you when ye were his enemies / and indifferētly hath prepared for your enemies euer lastinge blisse as he hath doo for you.

CThe. xxxii. is that ye curse not / nor say euill of them that curse oꝛ say euill of you but rather blyss them and say well of them that curse oꝛ say euill of you.

CThe. xxxiii. is that ye suffer and take in worthe / all aduersites / troubles / and persecutions done to you for iustice / oꝛ for your good lyuinge oꝛ well doynge.

CThe. xxxiiii. is that ye be not Browde neyther in your mynde nor hart / beere not your selfe aboue a nother / nor dispise noon other / nor be not opinatiue.

CThe. xxxv. is that ye gyue you not moche to drynkyng of wyne nor ale / nor none other drynke.

CThe. xxxvi. is that ye be not a glotten nor ete moche nor often / hastily nor gladly.

CThe. xxxvii. is that ye be not slepy and sluggyshe nor moche yeuened to slepe.

CThe. xxxviii. is that ye be not slowthfull / heuy / oꝛ slow to doo your office oꝛ duete.

CThe. xxxix. is that ye be not troublous / busy quarelyng / oꝛ grutchyng.

CThe. xl. is that ye be no detractor / bakbyter ne slaunderer nor reuyloꝛ of any person.

CThe. xli. is that ye put your full trust & all your hope oonly in god.

CThe. xlii. is that what so euer goodnes oꝛ vertue ye thynke to be in you that ye repute and knowe well that it cometh oonly of god and not of your selfe / ne of your merytes nor deservynge.

CThe. xliii. is that what so euer euill is in you / ye knowe for certeyne that it cometh of your selfe / & is done of your selfe / and so take and repute it.

CThe. xliiii. is that ye alwayes drede the day of iugement of god.

CThe. xlv. is that ye fere the paynes of hell.

CThe. xlii. is that ye longe for euerlastynge lyfe with all your mynde & inward desyre.

CThe. xlvii. is that ye allweyes suspecte deth / & haue it dayly in remembrance as though it were present and continually byfoze your yes.

CThe. xlviii. is that ye be well ware euery howe what dedes ye doo in this pient lyfe / that at no tyme ye fall oꝛ offede rechelesly oꝛ nedigent /

ly by dede / worde / oꝛ thought / but that you euer pmeditate /

and discusse byfore what ye shall doo / say / or intende.
¶ The. xix. is that ye knowe for certeyne that all myghty
god all weyes / And continually ouer loketh seeth & hereth
you / your werkes / wordes / and thoughtes in euery place
and tyme.

¶ The. l. is that ye by & by put a way all euyl thoughtes as so
ne as they come to your mynde / by fixinge your thoughtes &
remembraunces faste vpon crist & his passion merites & benefites.

¶ The. li. is that ye disclose your thoughtes & encoobrances
of your mynde to som holloin and agyed gostly fader.

¶ The. lii. is that ye kepe and refrayne your mouthe from
all euyl and shrewde speche and comunicacion.

¶ The. liii. is that ye loue not to vse many wordes nor mo
che speche.

¶ The. liiii. is that ye speke not nor vse no wordes that be in
utile vayne trifelinge ydle or prouokynge laughter.

¶ The. lv. is that ye loue not moche laughter or lowde or
soden laughter.

¶ The. lvi. is that ye here with mery harte & glad mynde
holy doctrines / sermons / exhortacions / lectur / & scriptures.

¶ The. lvii. is that ye gyue your selfe diligently often and
instantly vnto prayer.

¶ The. lviii. is that ye knowlege and cōfesse dayly in your
prayer vnto god all your synnes & euyl dedes of tyme pas
sed / with wepinge teares or at the leeste / with mourning / sob
byng and sorowynge for the doinge of them / & from thense
forth to kepe you fro the same synnes and euyl dedes.

¶ The. lix. is that ye fulfyll not the desyres and concupiscences
of the flesche and that ye hate your owne wyll.

¶ The. lx. is that ye obey in all thynges the comandemē
tes of your abbas / all though the (whiche god for bedde)
do other wyse hir selfe / hauing i mynde these wordes of all
myghty god / what so euer they comaūde you to doo / doo
ye / but doo not as they doo / that is to saye / when they doo
amysse.

CThe. lxi. is that ye haue no will nor desyre to be named
or called holy before ye so be: but that ye fast endeour you to
be holy: where though ye may desire to be called holy.

CThe. lxii. is that ye fulfill dayly in your worshipes and be-
des the comaundement of god.

CThe. lxiii. is that ye feruently loue the vertue of chastite.

CThe. lxiiii. is that ye hate no person.

CThe. lxv. is that ye haue no suspicion / rancor / malice / ne
enuy in you.

CThe. lxvi. is that ye loue no stryles ne debates ne: ther in
dedes nor wordes.

CThe. lxvii. is that ye eschewe
pyrde and bostryng and alle that may be the occasion of them.

CThe. lxviii. is that ye haue i reuerence your seniors & elders.

CThe. lxix. is that ye loue your yongres i the loue of chryste
that is to say as though theye as fathers & mothers i pitie in
erudicion: by doctrine / In example of holines / by dreevinge
them when they be out of the waye / and in plentiousnesse
of consolacion by confortyng them when they be feble.

CThe. lxx. is that ye pray for your enemies / that is to say
for theye reformation and saluacion.

CThe. lxxi. is if any wrothe / debate / or variace be amongs
any of you / that then ye be reconciled and returne to vnite &
peace by fore the soune goynge downe.

CThe. lxxii. is
that ye neuer dispayre of the mercy of all myghty god.

CLoe here suffers (sayth seynt Benet) these be the instru-
me[n]tes / doctrines / and instructions of spirituall crafte and
occupation / whiche if they be continually fulfilled by you
bothe by day and by nyght / and offered by fore god / and by
him recognised in the laste daye of iugement: ye shall be re-
compensed of all myghty god / with the rewarde that he ha-
the promysed / whiche neuer bodely yie hath seen neuer
ete hath harde / ne hart of man can thinke / whiche thynges
all myghty god hath spacyd and made redy for them that
loue him. The shoppe the howse of offyce / & werkynge place
wherein ye shalbe with the sayde Instrumentes diligently

to orde execute doo and byynge & boote all these rules doc-
trines and instructions is the cloyster of the monastery and
the stables and steadfastnes of religiouse conuersacion in the
couent and congregacion.

There foloweth the .v. chapter which treateth
of the obedience of Nuns.

The chiefe and principall degre of humilite is Obedi-
ence without taryng or delay makynge. This ver-
tue agreeth well and becometh those virgins / and to them
both eappteygne / whiche in their loue preferre no thyng /
by fore the loue of all myghty god / or to whome no thyng
is soo dere as christe. For eyther of the holy religion whiche
they haue pessed / or for fere of the bytter paynes of hell / or
elles for Joye of euerlastinge lyfe / as sone as any thyng is
them comaunded by their superioz to be doon / euen as it we-
re comaunded by god / they cannot nor maye not make nor
suffre any delay in the performyng or executyng therof /
but incontynent & forthwith doo it / euen as it were comaun-
ded of god / of whiche obedient psons all myghty god saith
thus / as sone as she hard me: she obeyed my comaundement.
And ageyne he sayth to them that be teachers of his lawes /
who soo euer herith you: hereth me / Therefore all those per-
sons that forsake all that theyers is / renoucinge their owne
wylles / and gyuinge vppon anon their busines / leuinge that
thyng vnperfited and vnfynished that they had in hande /
doo folowe the comaundementes of their superioz in dedes /
by and by and forthwith / and as in oon instant bothe those
two thing / that is to say the comaundement of the maistres /
and the perfite dedes of the disciple / be accomplisshed to god-
des swyftly thurgh the dyche of god : of suche as hath a sele
and inward desyre to goo to euerlastinge lyfe / for the which
sele and desyre / they take vppon theym a narrowe passage /
wherof (god sayth) It is a narrowe and a strait waye that

leedith vnto euerlastinge lyfe. that is to say not lyuynge after
their owne wyll/ne beynge obedient to their owne desyres
and vnlesfull pleasures/but continuynge their lyfe vnder the
Iugement and power of a nother/ lyuynge in monasteris:
haue a full desyre that an abbasse or prioressse / haue the pre-
emynence and rule ouer theym / all suche persons doubtles
follo we the sentence of all myghty god / wherin he sayth I
am nat come to accomplyshe myn owne wyll/but his whi-
che hath sent me. But this sealef same obedience shall then
be acceptable vnto god and plesant vnto other / whan that
thinge which is comaunded is effectuosly brought to ende/
not ferefully/slowly/or sayntly/ ne with grutch or denyng
noz arguynge noz resoning it/for obediēce which is shewed
vnto superiors in religiō/ is shewed vnto god/he sayth him
sealfe as it is aboue sayde / who so berethe you berethe me.
¶ Moreouer the disciple muste be obedient with a good &
free wyll / for god loueth him that gyueth a thinge with a
cherefull and a mery hart / for if so be that a disciple be obe-
dient with an euyl wyll / though she grutcheth not in wor-
des/pet if she grutch inwardly in hir hart/ not withstanding
it/she fulfyll the comaūdemēt that is gyuen vnto hir / yet is
it not acceptable vnto god / whiche beholdeth and consyde-
ryth the stomake/the hert/and mynde of the grudger. And
for suche a thinge though she doo it/she purchasyth no gra-
ce noz thanke / but rather she rennith in daunger and payne
of suche grudgers without she make amendis therfore.

¶ The.vi.chapiter treateth of silence
and sobernesse in wordes.

Let vs doo as the prophet sayth / I haue aduysid and
purposed with my sealef to take hede of my wayes/
that I offēde not with my toong/ I haue put a warde & ke-
pyng vppon my mouthe/I haue holden my peace / I haue
mehed my sealef / and I haue ceased and forborne from ty-

me to declare / that thyng that hath bene goode. **¶** There in
 sheweth the prophete that a man muste som tyme cease of
 good cōmunicacion to shewe the vertu of silence and sober-
 nes in word; moche more he ought to cease of euill cōmū-
 nicacion / for feere of punishment for his offenses. **¶** There-
 fore vnto disciples all though they be yfite / we wyll (sayth
 seynt Benet) that syldome licēce be graunted to speke / thou-
 ghe it be in goode / holy & edifyenge cōmunicacion / for luffe
 of the graunte and vertue that is in vslage of fewe wordes.
 For it is writtē in many word; it is harde to a voyde synne.
 And also in a nothyr place it is writtē / of the and lyfe han-
 geth the power of the toonge. For it becometh a maistrisse
 to speke and teche / And a discipule to kepe silence and here /
 therfore if any thynges be to be inquired / let the inquisition
 be made of the superior with all mekenes of spirite & body
 and with goode reuerence. **¶** Scoffis and Idle wordes or
 excitynge laughter in all places for euer we forbode and
 dampne (saith seynt Benet) And we wyll not that a discipule
 at any season be suffred to open his mouthe to suche lyght
 speche or cōmunicacion.

¶ The .vii. chapiter treateth of humilite.

DEre sisters (sayth seynt Benet) holy scripture cryeth
 vnto vs with these wordes. Every persone that ex-
 alteth him selfe shalbe humiliat / and brought vndre / And
 he that meketh and humbleth him selfe: shalbe exalted and
 brought vp. In this saynge holy scripture sheweth vnto vs
 that every maner of a mannes o'one exaltation or extollē-
 ce is a kynde and spie of pryde / of the which thyng the p-
 prophete sheweth him selfe to be ware: sayng. Good lord my
 hart is not exalted / nor my countenans is not hygge / pro-
 ude / nor statly. Neither I haue reioysed nor be proude of any
 great arte / speche / or vertu / nor I haue desyred for any mer-
 ueyles to be knowne to the people. Nor I haue any thyng

sought about my myght. But what good lozde / if I haue
not mekel behaued me / but exalted my mynde by pryde /
wayne glozpe / or presumption / then let my punishment be
lyke vnto the punishment of a solyngge childe the whiche
is wayned & denied his moders breste / and then doth pisse /
wherfore good sisters (sayth scynt Benet) if our mynde be
to attayne to the perfection of hygh humilite / if we wyll
swyftly come to that heuenly exaltacion / to the which men
doo ascende by the vertue of humylite in this present lyfe /
that same ladder muste be cetered and lyfte vppe with oure
deedes ascendynge / whiche apered to Jacob in a vision / by
the whiche ladder angelis were shewed vnto hun descen-
dyng and ascendynge. All which descension and ascension /
without doubt is noon nother wyse to be taken ne vnder-
stonde / but that men by exalting them selfe / doo discende &
by humbling the n selfe they doo ascende. The ladder so cetered
is our present lyfe in this worlde / the whiche thurgh a me-
ke harte is lyft vp by almyghty god vnto heuen. The sydes
of the same ladder / we call oure bodie and so wle / by twene
the whiche sydes thurgh the callynge of all myghty god be
ordred and set dyuerle steppes and degrees of humilite and
discipline as follo with.

CThe firste degree of humilite

The firste degree or steppe of humilite is that a religiose
person haue euer before his Ies and neuer forget the
drede of god / and that she haue also in remembrance the co-
maundementes of all myghty god / and howe the breckers
of his comaundementes for their offenses fall into the bytter
paynes of hell / and reuolue alwaye in her mynde the euer-
lastynge lyfe. whiche is ordred for theym that drede god.
And so keepynge hir selfe euery houre from synne / and vice /
that is to saye of thought / of tonge / of Ies / of handes / of fete
and of hir owne propre wyll / and also with all speede / heste

a way the appetites and desyres of the fleshe. ¶ Lat a man
well suppose that he is ouer loked euery houre from heuen
by all myghty god and that his dedes be seen of the godhed
in euery place / and that angell doo howeuerly shewe the dedes
of man to all myghty god. ¶ This the prophete declareth
vnto vs in that he sheweth / that god is all weye present to
our thoughtes saynge thus. God sercheth what me thinke
and what me delyte i. And ageyne he sayth. God knoweth
the thought of mā. Also the prophet sayth / Good lord thou
haste vnderstande my thoughtes afar. And the thoughtes
of man shall make confession and be open vnto the. And to
thentent that a religiouse person be very studiose and diligēt
in withstandinge euyl thoughtes lat hir say all wayes in
hir hart. Then shall I be clene and immaculate byfore him
when I kepe me from synne and iniquite. And also in lyke
wyse we be forbyd to doo our owne wyll / by cause scripture
sayth vnto vs. Be thou contrary to thyne owne wyll. And
also we make intercession to god in oure prayers / that his
wyll be fulfilled in vs. ¶ Therfore not without cause we be
taught not to doo our owne wyll / when that we take hede
of that / that holy scripture techeth vs sayng / certayne wayes
there be / which seemeth vnto man ryght good / but then
de ouerthroweth a man and bringeth him to the depe pytt
of hell. Moreouer we be taught in lyke wyse / whan we be
ware of that is sayde of negligent persones in this maner.
They be corrupt and made abhominable in their desyres &
wylls / and for the exchunge of the appetites of the fleshe /
lat vs beleue and thinke that god is alwayes soo nyghe and
present to vs / that they be euer opyn and manifest vnto him
ithen the prophete saith to all myghty god. By fore the and
to the is knowen euery of my desyre / Lat vs therfore be wa-
re of euyl lust or desyre / for euen ryght at the entre into de-
lectacion / standeth deth by dedly syn / wheruppon scripture
cōmaundeth saynge. follo we not thy cōcupiscence and de-
ris. ¶ Therfore sens it is soo that god beholdeth good & euyl /

and euer ouerloketh from his heuenly mansion the chylde
of men/ to see if there be any that hath any vnderstandynge
and seketh him. And moreouer sens it is soo that our dedes
be shewyd dayly vnto oure maker by angelles: deputed to
our custodie/ we must therfore delyuere oureselues (sayth seynt Be-
net) nedes be ware euery houre / as the pphete sheweth vs
in the psalme / that god fynde vs not in any tyme geuyng
our selfe vnto that thyng whiche is euyl / or fynde vs inu-
till or vnprofitable. And les that god sparynge vs in this p-
sent fyfe/ by cause he is full of pytie / loketh that we shulde
turne and amende/ say vnto vs in tyme to come/ Thus and
thus haste thou doon / and I haue suffred & holde my peace.
¶ The secōde degre of humilite is whā a religiose pson luf-
feth not hit owne wyl/ nor delyteth to fulfyl that thyng that
he desyreth. But follo werth the voyce of all myghty god
saynge/ I haue not cum to fulfyl myne owne wyl/ but his
that hath sent me/ that is to say goddys wyl my fader. More-
ouer scripture sayth after wyl follo with payne. And after
the necessite whiche cometh of obedience cometh a crowne
for a rewarde.

¶ The thirde degre of humilite is that a religiose person/ for
the loue of god in euery poynt of obedience/ submit hit selfe
to hit superiour/ folowynge the steppes of chryste/ of whome
thappostell sayth/ he was obedient vnto the fader of heuen
yea vnto deth.

¶ The.iiii. degre of humilite is/ whā a religiose person for
the vertu of obediēce / in thynges that be harde and cōtrary
to hit mynde/ yea and in wronges takith paciēce / and suffe-
rynge/ chideth not/ grudgeth not/ ne therfore turneth hit
mynde from hit goode purpose/ the scripture of all myghty
god saynge/ who soo cōtinueth to the ende: he shalbe sauued/
& agayne haue a stronge harte / & suffer for all myghty god.
And moreouer scripture shewyng / that a feythfull persone
ought to suffre contrariouse thyngs and aduersities for goddys
sake / saith vnto god as in the persone of the pacient/ for the

goode lord we be pynned with deth all the daye longe
and none other wyle be we accomptyd/ but as thepe be we
to the slaughter/ and thus persistinge sure in hope of redem-
de of almyghty god/ they cōfesse we Joyfully saynge thye
wordes. yet in all these thynges: we haue the victorie and
ouerhande by hym whiche hath loued vs. Moreover in a
nother place holy scripture sayeth. Goode lord thou haste
proued vs/ thou haste tryed vs/ as syluer is tryed i fyre/ thou
haste brought vs into daunger/ thou haste layde vppon our
backes tribulacions/ And by cause scripture wolde shewe/
that we ought to be vnder a superior/ he cōtynuyeth sayng/
thou haste ordeyned and set me to be ouer our heddes. But
what religiose persons fulfylling With patience the cōmaū-
diment of god in aduersities and iniuries/ the which when
they be strycken vppō that oon cheke/ offre the other/ which
leue their mantell to him/ that taketh a way their cote/ whi-
che when they be enforced to goo oon myle/ tēneth. ii. / whi-
che with the apostell Paule suffereth false bretherne & sistren
whiche suffered persecution & blessing/ or sayth well of other
that sayth euyll of theym / All these persons kepeth this de-
gre of humilite.

The. v. degre of humilite is if a religiose person hyde not/
but by lowly cōfession shewe to the fader spirituell/ all euyll
thoughtes cōmyng to the hart/ and all his synnes pryuely
cōmitted. Scripture exhortynge vs to this thyng saythe.
Shewe vnto god thy lyfe and thy demeanoure / and truste
vnto him. And agayne he sayth/ Make your cōfession vnto
our lord god in so moche as he is goode: for his mercy is
without ende/ and also the prophete sayth. I haue declared
vnto the my faute/ and I haue not hyd my iniquities: I ha-
ue sayde. I shall confesse ageynste my selfe my synnes to all
myghty god / and thou goode lord haste forggyuen me the
iniquite of my harte.

The syxth degre of humilite is when a mynchyn is con-
tent with euery vyle worke / and lowest offyce / & with the

extremite of euery lowe degre / & that she iuge hir selfe vn-
worthy and vnpofurable to all thynges that be comitted
vnto hir / sayngt with the pphete, I am brought to nought
& was not ware nor knewe it / I am but as a beeeste to warde
the good lord / and yet am I all wey with the.

The. vii. degre of humilite is / if that a mynchyn in euery
behalfe she we hir selfe to be inferiour vnder all other / & more
vile person than any other / and that she doo thus nat only
with hir toonge / but also that she thynke it inwardly in hir
hart / submittynge hir selfe / and saynge with the prophete /
I am a worme: and not a woman / the rebukynge stocke of
me / and outcaste of people / nowe exalted / nowe put downe
and confounded. And also it is written / Goode it is for me
goode lord that thou haste brought me vnder / wherby I
may lerne thy comaundementes.

The. viii. degre of humilite is / that a mynchyn doo noo
thyng except that that the comune reule of the monastery
or els the examples of their elders and superiours me of the
holy doctrine and couersacion / byddeth or exhorteth.

The. ix. degre of humilite is / whā a mynchyn refrayneth
hir toonge from spekyng / and whan she kepeth silēce and
putteth not fourth no spekethe no worde / tyll she be questi-
oned / holy scripture she wyng / that in moche spekyng syn
is hardely auoyded / and that a man fulle of wordes: can-
not be well ordered / or kepe strayght waye in this presente
lyffe.

The. x. degre of humilite is. whan a mynchyn is not ly-
ght or prone to lawghter / for it is writtē / he is a fol that ex-
alteth his vice in lawghter.

The. xi. degre of humilite is: if a mynchyn / when she spe-
keth / doo speke soffly without lawghynge with mekenes
of spirite and body / and with grauite / fewe wordes and re-
sonable / and that she be noo great cryer / no speke a lowde /

as it is written / A wysentian is knowen in fewe wordes.

The .xii. degre of humilitie is: if a mynchyn shewe meek-
nes and lowlenes to theym that loke vpon hir / not only in
hart / but also in body / that is to say / when she is in hir laboure
re / when she is at worke / when she is in hir oratorie / when
she is in prayer / when she is in monastery / i garden / or whe-
resoeuer she be / sittynge / walkynge / or stondynge she bow-
eth do wne hir hedde / hir yes fixed to warde the Erth. And
supposynge / and euery houre thynkynge hir seife to be gyl-
te of hir synnes / thynketh that she is presented to the ferefull
Iugement of all myghty god / saynge all way as the publi-
can of whome is made mencion in the gospell / the whiche
his yes fixed into the erth saye. Good lord I am not wor-
thy to lyfte vp myne yes to wardes heuen / And ageyn with
the prophete. I am bowed downe: and made meke in eue-
ry cōdicion. **N**owe in cōclusion all these degres of humi-
litate ascended and clymed: a mynchyn at oons shall come
to that brennyng loue of god / the whiche loue comes sta-
blyshed and made parfeyte in hir / dreueth out all fere by the
whiche she shall begynne to kepe / of custome and in maner
naturally / without laboure and payne / all maner of vertue
cur thynges / whiche she kepte not by fore without greate
payne & labour / And that not for the feare of the bytter pay-
nes of hell / but for the loue of christe / and for the same goode
custom and for the delectacion of vertu / whiche thynges all
myghty god shall then vouchsaue to shewe in his seruant
purified and made cleane of vices and synnes / thurgh the
grace of the holy gooste.

The .viii. chapter treateth of the diuine
seruyce by nyght.

In wynter that is to say fro the fyrste day of Nouembra vnto the feste of Easter mynchyns muste aryse at the viii. houre after it be myght that is to saye after the sonne be sette / takynge the same houre durynge all that tyme as it is aforseyde. Fyrste daye of Nouembra to thintent that they may take their reste vnto some what after mydnyght / and then aryse haunyng naturall dygestion. And when the nocturne is ended they shall all the residue of the tyme bytwene that and matyns or laudes whiche is all oon / gyue them selfe to redyng / som the spaulter / som lectournes / or other diuine seruyce / whereof they haue most nede or wherein they be mooste vncedy. From Easter vnto the firste day of Nouembra a forseyde / the houre of their wakyng and arysyng shall be so ordred that a lyttel pause made after the nocturne is ended / wherein the mynchyns may goo to doo suche necessary busines as nature requireth / anon matyns or laudes shall folowe / whiche they muste be saynge in the dycke of the daye.

The .ix. chapter treateth what psalmes shall be sayd at the nocturnes in the wynter tyme.

In wynter after this verse Deus in adiutorium meum intende: Dñe ad adiuvandum me festina / follo weth the next and immediately. Domine labia mea aperies: & os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam / the whiche turyple songe / follo weth this psalme Dñe quid multiplicati / with glia patri / and after that Venite with the Inuitatorie must be songe. Then follo weth the hymne / & after it .vi. psalmes with their antems / then the versicle: whiche ended / the abbasse shall gyue the bñdiction. And all the quere syttinge i their stalles or set / there shall be red by .iii. mynchyns appoynted therto. .iii. lectours within boke / vppō the deske or lectourne / bytwene whiche lessons. .iii. respōses must be songe wherof ii. responses shall be without glia patri. & the thirde with glia patri.

And when the gloria patri is begonne / anon all shall aryse
out of their setes / makinge obeyssaunce to wardes the hygh
aulter / in the worship and reuerence of the holy Trinite / The
lessons which they rede at the nocturne / shalbe of booke as
well of the olde testementes as of the newe / and also the ex-
positions of both the testementes / whiche haue be made of
moost famose doctours and beste lerned in holy scripture / &
mooste catholique faders / After these. iiii. lessons with their
respondes / follo weth other. vi. psalmes / with alleluya / then
the Chapter muste be redde by harte / with a versicle and
kyrieleison / with the preces / And soo ended the nocturne
whiche we call comunely matyngs to the laudes.

The. x. chapter treateth of the
diuine seruice by nyght in the so-
mer tyme.

In Rome Ester vnto the firste daye of November / the
quantite of the psalmodie shalbe obserued / as is abo-
uesayd / but the. iiii. lessons which were wont to be redde in
the booke / shall by cause of the shortnes of the nyght not be
redde / but for them there shalbe redde / oon lesson of the olde
testamēt by hart / without booke / With the which a short res-
pōse shall follo we / & all the remenant shalbe obserued & do-
ne / as is abouesayd / And it is to vnderstōde / that neuer lesse
then. xii. psalmes shalbe songe at the noctourn / by sydes do-
mine quid multiplicati and venite.

The. xi. chapter sheweth howe
the Nocturnes shalbe sayde vp-
pon the sondayes.

Upon sondayes the Synchins must aryse more ere-
ly to the nocturne / in the which must be kept a nother
mesure / that is to say / the. vi. psalmes shalbe songe as we ha

ne afoze ordred with the versicle / & then all sittynge in order i
their seetes / there must be redde vppon the boke. iiii. lessons
with their responses / where doonly after the . iiii. responce /
shalbe songe gloria patri / whiche begonne / anon all muste
aryle with reuerence makynge their obeysance / After the
whiche lessons follo with by order / other . vi. psalmes with
their antemes as the . vi. afoze byd / and with a versicle. after
the whiche ageyne / other. iiii. lessons muste be redde / with
their responses / after the order abouesayde . After the whi-
che muste be songe. iiii. canticles of the prophetes / which the
abbasse shal assigne / and they shalbe songe with alleluya .
Then the versicle songe / and the benedictio gyuen by thab-
basse / other. iiii. lessons of the newe testamet must be redde /
after the maner abouesayde / & after the . iiii. responce / thab-
basse shal begyn: Te deum / the whiche ended / he shal re-
de a lesson of the gospell / with de we reuerence and fere / all
stondynge vppon their fete / that doon they shal ans were to
gydder Amen . Then thabbasse muste begyn the hymne:
Te decet laus / and after that the benediction is gyuen / they
muste begynne matyns / whiche we call laudes / The whi-
che ordre as to wchinge the nocturne / at all tymes / as well
somer as wynter / must be equaly kept vppon the sondays /
Except the mynchins fortune (as god forbede) to ryle late
and so make shorter their lessons or responses / The whiche
thyng must all way be take hede of that it happen not / and
if it soo happen / let hir doo therfore vnto god due and con-
digne satisfaction in the oratory / whiche we call the quere /
by whose negligence and ouersyght it was doon.

¶ The . xii. chapiter treateth ho we the
matyns whiche we call the laudes /
shalbe sayd vppon the sondaye.

In matyngs of laudes which is all oon vppon the son-
day: fyrste is sayd this psalme Deus miseratur / with-
out anteme. after the whiche / folowith this psalme Mis-
erere mei deus with alleluia / then Confitemini the .iii. then
Deus deus meus / Benedicite omnia opera / and Laudate
dñm de celis / After them a chapter of the apocalyps with-
out boke / an hymne / a versicle / Benedicte with an antem
And hyrieleyn with the pces folowinge / And so is en-
dyd the matyngs of laudes / whiche is all oon.

The .xiii. chapiter treateth howe matyngs of
laudes shalbe sayd vpon the feryall dayes.

Uppon feryall dayes / this wise shall matyngs of laud-
be executyd / The first psalme is Deus miseratur with-
out any anteme / which psalme shalbe songe tretably as vp-
pon the sonday / that all the couent may come to the begyn-
nyng of Miserere / whiche muste nexte be songe with an
anteme / After the whiche psalme / other .ii. psalmes muste
be songe / after the custom / that is to say / vppon the monday
Verba mea: Dixit iniustus / vppon the tuesday Iudica me
deus and Miserere the .ii. vppon the wednesday Exaudi
deus orationem meam cum deprecor and Te decet / vppon
the thursday Domine deus salutis and dñe Refugium / vp-
pon the fryday Notus in iudea and Bonum est confiteri /
vppon the saterday Domine exaudi orationem meam auri-
bus percipe . And Audite celi que loquar / whiche psalme
shallbe deuyned in two: with .ii. gloria patri. for vppon o-
ther dayes / euery canticle of the prophetes that belongeth
to the daye / shallbe songe as the church of Rome syngeth.
That is to saye / vppon Mundaye the canticle / Confitebor
vppon tuesday Ego dixi / vppon wednesday Exultate
vppon thursday Catenus / vppon fryday Domine audiam.

After this folowith Laudate dñm de celis / then a chapter
without booke of the appostle / an ympue and a versicle / be-
nedictus with an anteme / than hyzlecyson and the piers /
and so it is shende / But at the ende of euery matyns or lau-
des and euensong a pater noster shalbe sayde also wde of the
piloysse / so that all the quere may here it and that for the
chynge of dissencions and debates / malices / greues and
grudges the whiche be woute often tymes to ipzyng / by
cause that the mynchys moniff hed thzowgh the promyle
of the petition of the pater noster / wherin they say . Goode
lorde forgiue vs our trespas as we forgyue other / may pur-
ge theym selfe from the same faute . In all other howres of
diuine seruice there shall no more be sayd also wde of the pa-
ter noster / but Et ne nos / so that all the quere may ans were
Sed libera nos.

CThe. xiiii. chapter treateth howe the nocturne
shalbe sayd vpon sayntes dayes.

Uppon sayntes dayes and in other solenne festes / they
shall execute all diuine seruice i the nyght / as we ha-
ue comaunded to be doon vppon sundayes / Excepte onely
that those psalmes / antems / and lessos shalbe songe / which
belongeth to the daye. But the maner in executinge shalbe
kept as is abouesayde.

CThe. xv. chapter treateth what
tymes alleluya shalbe sayde.

From the holy feste of Ester / vnto the feste of witsons
tyde / alleluya shalbe songe continually / bothe with
psalmes & respons / from witson tyde vnto Septuagesima /
at the nocturne it shall be onely songe nyghtly with the. vi.
latter psalmes / euery sonday / except the sondayes by twene
septuagesima and Easter / the canticles matyns or laudes

which is all oon Prime/the thirde houre/the. vi. houre/and
the houre at none/ with alleluya. Euenlonge shalbe with
oon anteme/respondes shall neuer be songe with alleluya.
but bytwene ester and whitsontyde.

The. xvi. chapter treateth howe diuine
seruyce on the daytyme shalbe sayd.

The prophete sayth to all myghty god. I haue gyuen
to the laude and pray synge. vii. tymes in the daye.
with holy nombre of. vii. /shalbe fulfilled in vs / if we paye
the duties of our seruyce/ in the tyme of matyns or laudes /
Prime/the. iii. houre/the. vi. houre/the houre at none/euen-
longe & Complene / for of these houres is it/that the pphete
sayth / Seuen tymes by the day I haue lauded and pray-
sed the/ for of the diuine seruice/that is to say the nocturne /
whiche is done by nyght /the selfe same prophete saythe / I
rose at midnyght to knowlege my selfe vnto the. wherfore
good susters at those seasons/let vs gyue laude & pray synge
to our maker/for the iugemetes of his iustice / that is to say
at matyns or laudes: Prime the thirde houre / the. vi. houre
at none/euenlonge / & cōplene / And in the nyght let vs aryse
to knowlage his ryghtoulnes to cōfesse our selfe vnto him.

The. xvii. chapter treateth what
psalmes shalbe sayde at diuine ser-
uice in the daytyme.

Thus haue we declared the order of the psalmody at
the nocturne and matens or laudes/and now let vs
see for the houres that follo wethe . At Prime / there shalbe
song. iii. psalmes/euery of theym by him selfe /With his glo-
ria patri. But the hymne of the same/euer shalbe song af-
ter Deus in adiutorium/ byfore the psalmes be begō / After
the. iii. psalmes: shalbe redde a chapter/ than a versicle / and

D.i.

Kyrieleyson/with the p̄ces follo'wynge. Also in the thirde
houre/the. vi. houre/and the houre at none/they shall execute
in lyke maner: fyrste with Deus in adiutorium/than the
hymne that belongeth to the houre/thre psalmes/a chap-
ter/a versicle / kyrieleyson with the p̄ces. And if the cōpa-
ny be great/than the houres shall be executed/with their an-
tems/ If the cōpany be small / thā shall they execute the say-
de houre/ without their antems. And euenson; there shall
be songe. iiii. psalmes with their antems / than a chapter /
an hymne/a versicle/Magnificat with the antemie. kyrie-
leyson with the p̄ces/ & pater noster/and soo depart. Com-
plene shall be executed with. iiii. psalmes/ which shall be songe
without antemie/After the which/shall follo'we the hymn-
ne of the same houre/a chapter/a versicle /kyrieleyson:a be-
nediction/and the p̄ces and so departe.

CThe. xviii. chapter treateth by what order
the same psalmes shall be sayde.

Fyrste every houre of the daye shall begyn with Deus
in adiutorium / and gloria patri. After the hymne
that belongeth to the houre. And vppon the sonday at pry-
me they shall synge. Beati immaculati vnto Regem pone.
At other houres/that is to say / thirde/syxt/and none / they
shall synge. Regem pone: vnto Lucerna pedibus meis / vp-
pon monday at prime they shall synge. iiii. psalmes / that is
to say: Beatus vir: Quare fremuerunt: and Domine ne in
furore/ At the houres/thirde/sixt/and none/ they shall syn-
ge from Lucerna pedibus / vnto Ad dominū cū tribularet.
The tuesday at prime theis be the psalmes. Domine deus
meus: Domine dominus noster: and Confitebor: vnto this
verle: Surge. And the houres/thirde/syxt /and none / they
shall synge from Ad dñm cum tribularet: to Sepe expug-
nauerunt. And so dayly vnto the sondaye /shall be repeted at
the houres/the psalmes aforesayd. And the order of hymn-

nes chapters and versicles shalbe dayly kept after oon ma-
 ner. Upon wednesdaye at prime theis be the psalmes. *Ex-
 urge. In domino confido: and Saluū me fac.* Upon thurs-
 day at prime: *Usquequo domine: Dixit insipiens: and Qui
 quis habitabit.* Upon fryday. *Conserua me domine. Ex-
 audi domine. and Diligam.* vnto *Cum sancto sanctus eris.*
 Upon Saturday. *Cū scō sanctus eris. Celi enarrant. Ex-
 audiat te dominus.* And thus vpon the Sondag shall they
 begynne their psalmes of prime a geyne at *Beati immacu-
 lati.* Euenlonge shalbe songe with. iiii. psalmes. And vppō
 the sonday these be the psalmes. *Dixit dominus. Cōfitebor.
 Beatus vir. & Laudate pueri.* The mondaye. *In exitu. Di-
 lexi. Credidi propter. and Laudate dominum omnes gētes.*
 with *Sepe expugnauerunt* as oon psalme: and vnder oon
 gloria patri. The Thuesdaye. *Deprofundis. Domine non.
 Memento. and Ecce q̄ bonum.* The wednesdaye. *Laudate
 nomen. Cōfitemini. Super flumina. and Cōfitebor.* The
 Thursdaye. *Domine probasti deuideri in two / with twyse
 gloria patri. Eripe me. and Domine clamaui.* The frydaye.
*Voce mea. Benedictus i two / with twyse gloria patri. and
 Exaltabo vnto Confiteantur.* And the saturdaye. *Confite-
 antur. Lauda anima mea. Laudate dūm qm̄ bonus psalm⁹.
 and Lauda hierusalem.* ¶ Nowe an order set for psalmes at
 euenlonge/all other maner of thynges/ that is to say / chap-
 tres/respondes/hymnes/versicles/and canticles shalbe cō-
 tinued as is abouesayd. ¶ At cōplen/oon maner of psalmes
 shalbe had thurgh out the weke/that is to say. *Cum Inuo-
 carem. Qui habitat. and Ecce nunc.* Thus a direction set of
 the psalmodie/whiche shalbe songe in the seruice of the day
 tyme / all the residue of the psalmes of the psalter / muste be
 equally diuided into the nocturns of the. vii. nyghtes of the
 weke. Diuidynge alway in two / those psalmes whiche be
 lengeste amonge other/ And orderynge. xii. psalmes to eue-
 ry nyght / yeyynge spirituall knowlege / that if fortune anye
 man to be mylcontēt with this diuisiō of psalmes. Let him

order them other wyse / if he so thynke it better / so that this
be alwayes obserued and well take hede to / that euery we
be the psalter of the hole numbꝛ of. C. l. psalmes be longe
to thende. And vppon Sondaye at the nocturne / that they
begynne at the hed ageyne. For mynchins sheweth theym
selve to be very dull / and of small deuocion / whiche by the
cōpase of a hole weke / syngeth lesse then the psalter / with
other diuine seruice accustomable / seinge that we rede that
holy fathers haue doon valliantly and gladly with greate
courage that thinge in oon daye / the which wolde god / we
of a faynt courage myght brynge a boute in a hole weke.

CThe. xii. chapter treateth of the doctrine
of syngynge.

We beleue that god is euery where present / that he
beholdeth in euery place / both them that be good /
and them that be euill / But specyally let vs then
thynke & beleue / that it is soo without any maner of doubt /
whan we be at the diuine seruice / therfore let vs allway ha-
ue in remembrance / that the prophete sayth. Do your duety
and seruice vnto god with fere / And agayne. Syng ye wy-
sely and intentyuely. Moreouer he sayth I shall synge vnto
the in the face and syght of angelles. Therfore good sisters
(sayth seynt Benet) let vs well cōsyder / howe we must be-
haue our selfe in the syght of all myghty god / and of his an-
gelles. And whansoever we come to gydder / to synge the
seruice of god / let vs take good hede / that our mynde accor-
de to our voice / and that they twayne renne both oon way /
and vppon oon thyng.

CThe. xiii. chapter treateth of the reuerence
that ought to be had in prayers.

If it so be that we intende to labour / or breke any mat-
tier with a noble man / we take nothyng vppon vs /
nor nothyng presume / but with humilite and due reuerē-
ce / howe moche more then ought we to make our supplica-
cion to all myghty god / kyng of all kynges / and lord of all
men / with all maner of mekenes / lawly reuerence / and pu-
re deuocion. And knowe we for certeyne / that not in many
wordes / but in clenness of harte / and cōpuncion of teres / he
wyl graciously here vs. Therfore / prayer muste be shorte
and pure / except parauenture it be prolonged / thurgh
the loue and affection of the Inspiraciō of the grace of god.
Howe be it all waye in congregacion / prayer shall be short /
And after a serteine signe or token made of the prioress / all
shall aryse and goo to gyther.

**The .xxi. chapter treateth of the deanes
of the monastery.**

If the couent be greate / we woll that certeyne of the
susters of good proufe / and holy cōuersacion / be cho-
sen and made deanes / which so made and ordeigned / shall
with all diligence take charge and hede / vppon their deanes-
res / in all maner of thyng / that apparteyneth to the cōmaū-
dementes of god / and preceptes of their abbasse. which dea-
nes / we will be elected suche persons / amonges whom the
abbasse may suerly diuide and distribute / parte of hir office
and charges / and the sayde Deanes / shall not be chosen by
order / but after the desertes and merytes of their lyues / and
after their wyse doctryne / & good example / & if any of them
inflamed with pryde / be foude reprobable / if after that she
be corrected / ons / twice / or thryse / If she woll not then amē-
de / let hir be adoyded / and a nother succede in hir place / whi-
che is worthy the roome / And of theym that be or deyned

pzepositours / whiche may be called Prioresses / we make
lyke constitucion.

CThe. xxi. chapter treateth in what
maner Nynchyns shall take their
reste and slepe.

Euerpe oon of the mynchyns shall haue hir bedde by
hir selfe alone to rest in / they shall take their bedding
acco:dyng to the maner of their couersacion / and after the
disposition and ordynance of the abbasse. And it may so be/
all shall slepe in oon doxter. If the multitude wyll not suffre
it / then. x. or. xx. or moo / shall reste and haue their bedde to
geyther with certeyne senioures / that may diligently loke
vnto them. A candell shall continually brenne in the doxter/
vnto it be morninge / they shall slepe i their clothes / and they
shalbe gy:de with thonges or with cordes / and they shall
haue no knyfe at their syde / Whē they slepe / lesse be the mis-
chaunce they be hurte slepyng. And this shall Nynchyns
doo to thentēt / that they may al way be redy / & that they at
certeyne watche or token made / may rylse vp without any
tareyng / and make spede / euery of them to preuent other /
to the seruyce of almyghty god / yet not withstōdyng they
shall doo it with all grauite & sobernes. The yonger lusters
shall not haue their beddes togyther / But meddeled by
twyxt the beddes of their elders / they that be furste vp and
redy to ward the seruyce of god. Shall make soon softe and
sobze sty:ryng / with the soude of their mouthes / or of their
ete / or knockyng vppō the beddes sydes / to a wake theym
that be sluggardes.

CThe. xxiii. chapter treateth of
excomunicacion.

If any suster be stubbern/inobedient/provde/oz i any
maner grutchynge of thingz/contrary to the holy ru-
le oz els be espyed and foude a dispiser of the preceptes of hir
elders/let hir be monished/accordeinge to the comaundemēt
of all myghty god / oons oz twyse / secretly of hir semours.
If she do not therby amende/ then let hir haue a open rebu-
ke / byfore all the couent. And if she wylnot soo amēde/and
knowe what the payne & daūger of excomunicacion is / let
hir be excomunicate. But if she be rude & sturdye /without
shame oz feare of god/let hir be put to bodely punishment.

**The .xxiiii. chapter treateth of the maner
of excomunicacion.**

After the quantite of the offence/muste be the mesure
of excomunicacion and discipline. The whiche ma-
ner oz quantite of thosfye / hangeth in the iugement / and
estimacion of the abbasse. But if any susters /be founde in a
lyght offence/she shall be depriued the cōpany of hir susters/
at the table. And of hir that is soo depriued from the com-
pany at mete/this shalbe the ordre/that i the quere /she shall
not begynne psalme ne anteme / nor rede anye lesson / vnto
the tyme that she haue doon satisfaccion for hir offence /she
shall take refection of mete and drynke /after hir susters alo-
ne as thus. If hir susters take repaste at the .vi. houre of the
day/she shall take repaste at the .ix. houre. And if hir susters
at the .ix. houre/thā she at the euyngge vnto the tyme that
she purchase forgyuenes/with cōuenient satisfaccion.

CThe. xxv. chapter treateth of the offenses that be mooste greuouse.

That suster that is noted and taken in a moze greuouse offence/shalbe suspendyd/both from the table/and from the quere. None of hir sisters shall eyther accompany with hir/or speke with hir. She shall be alone at all occupation and worke that is enioyned vnto hir / perseuerynge in the weylinge of penance /vnderfondyng the frutfull sentence of the appostle/saynge suche a woman is geuen to the deuyll/as far as to cheth the destruccion of hir body. that hir soule may be sauuer at the daye of iugement of all myghty god. She shall ete hir mete alone. in what mesure / and at what houre thabbasse woll iuge coueniēt/ And none of hir sisters passyng by hir/shall salue or blyss hir or hir mete.

CThe. xxvi. chapter treateth of them that accompany with excommunicat persons.

If any suster presume without the comaundement of thabbasse / to accompany hir selfe with any excommunicate suster in any maner of wyse/or to speke with hir / or els to directe any message or wrytyng to hir/let hir be punished with lyke payne of excommunication.

CThe. xxvii. chapter treateth howe the Abbasse muste be diligent aboute the sisters excommunicate.

The abbasse must take hede with all hir diligēce vppō those sisters which doo offence/for they that be seke & they that be hole/haue nede of a physiciō/ & therfore she must
[vse all

wayes as a wyse and an experte Physicion / to sende to the
 offender / som aged sisters as though they were hir secrete
 frendes and aydours / which shall priuily comfort hir suster /
 that is wauerynge / and styr and prouoke hir to do satisfac-
 tion with humilite / & so shall they shewe cōforte vnto hir /
 that she fall not into dyspayre. But (as the appostle sayth)
 charyte may be in hir cōfermed and establysshed / and let all
 hir sisters pray for hir. **T**erwly thabbasse is bounde great-
 ly to be ware / and with all hir wysdome and labour to ta-
 ke heede / lesse she lose any of hir shepe cōmitted vnto hir cure
 She muste well knowe that she hath take in honde / the cu-
 re of feble so wylles / and not to be as a lady ouer theym / that
 be hole and stronge. And let hir fere the thretynge of the
 prophete / by whome all myghty god saythe. That thyng
 which ye did see hole and so wnde / that ye toke and deuow-
 ted / and that that was seke & feble / ye dyspised and did caste
 out. And thabbasse shall also folowe the piteouse example
 of the good shepeherde / which leuyng. lxxx. and. xix. of his
 shepe / in the hylls and wyldernesse / went to seke his oon
 shepe whiche was wanderynge and strayed a way / vppon
 whose feblenes and disease he had so greate cōpassion / that
 he vouchyd saue / to couche hir vppō his holy shulders. and
 and so to brynge hir ageyne to his floche.

The. xxviii. chapiter treateth of them that
 amēde not them selfe after due warnyngs
 and monicions.

If any suster rebuked or corrected for any maner of of-
 fence / yea and after excomunicacion / if she doo not a-
 mēde / she muste haue a sharpe correction / that is to say / let
 hir be punished with the betyng. And if thereby she wyl not
 amēde or elles perauenture (as god defende) she dothe

leuate hir selfe in pryde/and wyl also defende hir debes/that
shall the abbasse doo lyke a wyse physicion/that is to say. If
she haue fyrste layde vnto hir soule and nutrishyng mede-
cynes / If she haue also layde vnto hir the oymementes of
good exhortaciōs / If she haue layd vnto hir the medicynes
of holy scripture/yea and at the laste / if she haue added there
to the corrosyue of excoicatio/oz ells punisshment of betyng/
And yet for all these espye that hir labor puaileth nothyng/
the let hir to the sayd medecines adde that thyng / which is
more soueraigne/that is to saye/hir owne and all hir sisters
prayers for hir/that almyghty god/which all thyng may/
wyl vouchesafe /to mynster helthe to their syke suster / and
if by these meanes she be not heled / Then let thabbasse vse
the Instrumēt of abscision/as thapostle sayth. Caste a way
the euyl from amonge you. And agayne he sayth. An vn-
frutfull pson /if she goo/let hir goo /lesse oon scabbyd shepe
do infect and poyson the hole flocke.

CThe. xxix. chapter treateth/whether that
sisters which haue departed oz be put out
of the monastery/shalbe receyued agayn.

ASuster whiche goyth out / oz be put out of the mo-
nastery thurght hir owne faulte/ If she wyl retozne
a gayne/furst let hir promyse/fully to amende the faulte/for
the whiche she went out/oz was put out / and soo let hir be
receyued into the loweste degre/ That thereby hir humilite
may be proued. And if she goo out agayne / let hir be recey-
ued in lyke maner the thirde tyme. But after that / Let hir
knowe well/that all returnyng into the monastery/shalbe
denygged vnto hir.

CThe. xxx. chapter treateth howe mynchins
oeinge chyldren shalbe corrected.

E Or euery age and vnderstandynge must be a verye
propre and speciall mesure of correction or discipline/
and therfore/damaelles or chyldre of lesse age /yea and also
they that vnderstonde not howe great payne of excomunica
cion is:all suche whan they doo offende/muste be punisshyd
with great fastynge or els be kepte vnder / with sharpe be
tynges/ wherby they may amende.

**The. xxxi. chapter treateth of the
Selleresse and hir offyce.**

The Selleresse of the monastery muste be chosen out
of the couent / wyse / type in goode maners / sobre / no
great eter / not proude / not troublouse / no rebuker / or reuiler /
not slowe / not prodigall. But dreyng god / whiche muste
be to the hole couent as a moder. She shall take charge of
all maner of thynges / she shall nothyng doo / without the
comaundement of thabbasse / and what so euer thabbasse
comaundeth: that shall she fulfyll / And what so euer thab
basse comytteth to hir custody / she shall kepe it / She shall
not moleste / angre / nor make heuye hir sisters / And if hir
sister ake of hir any thyng vntreasonably / she shall not des
piteously angre / or wery hir / But resonablye with goode
mode and mekenesse / she shall denye hir / that asketh other
wyse the she ought to doo / Let hir see wel to hir owne so w
le / haupnge in mynde the wordes of thapostle / that she that
both hir de wte and seruyce well: purchaseth vnto hir selfe
a good estate and degre. She muste take vppō hir the char
ge and ouer syght / with all hir diligens of seeke yf sons / chil
dren / gyftes / & poure people: vnderstōding out of the doubt.
that for all theis / at the day of dome she must gyue accōpt.
she shall ouersee all the vesselles & vtēiles of the monastery
& all the substance of the same / & so loke to the / euy n as they

were they consecrate and halowed vessels of the Aultre:
And she shall suffre nothyng / though it be of lytell value /
to goo to waste / nor vnloked to nor necligently left or losse /
She shall not gyue hir selfe to couetousnes / ne yeat be pro-
digall in expenses / or els a destroye of the substance of the
monastery. But she shall al thynges doo in mesure / and ac-
cording to the comaundemēt of the abbasse / Aboue al thyngs
she shall prefer humylite / and whan she hath not for to gy-
ue the thyng that is asked : she shall gyue a fayre answer /
as it is wrytten / a fayre worde is more worth : than the gret-
teste gyfte that may be / All maner of thynges that the ab-
basse hath comytted vnto hir shal haue vnder hir charge : &
what soo euer thabbasse doth prohibyte : that shall she not p-
sume to do . She shall deliuer to hir Susters / their dutye of
mete & drynke / wifhout anye simulaciō / checke / or grudge / &
without delay / so that by hir they haue noo occasion to offe-
de / remembryng the saynge of all myghty god / What is
she worthy to haue : that gyueth occasion of synne / to an in-
nocent and lowly person. If the couent be great / she shal ha-
ue helpe and comfort of other / by whose socour / she shall do
hir duty and offyce comytted vnto hir / with a goode wyll /
without any grudgyng / that that is to be gyuen / muste be
gyuen in a competente tyme / And that that is to be asked /
must be in lyke wyse / soo that no person be troubled / vexed /
grieved / or made angry : in the howse of god.

Che. xxxii. chapter treateth of the ke-
pyng and occuppence of the goodes
of the monastery.

As touchyng the keepyng / occuppenc / or ministryng
of the mouable goodes of the monastery : as serra-
tes / instrumētes / loomes / vessels / vesture / and all other ma-
ner of suche thynges / thabbasse shall prouyde suche susters /
of whose lyuyng and good maners / she stonde in suerte

of / & deliuer every thyng to them / to be kept & gadered to gy-
der as she suggeth to the moze pfyte. Of the which goodes
thabbasse shall kepe an Inuentatory or a byll indented: that
when so euer / sisters succedethe oon after a nother into the
sayde offyce: she may knowe what she deliuereth / & what
she receyueth. If any sister handle or entreate the goodes of
the monastery vngoodly / or negligently: let hir be rebuked /
and if she doo amende / let hir suffre discipline and correctio /
acco:dyng to the rule.

CThe. xxxiii. chapter treateth of
proprietie.

Principally and before all other vices / this vice of pro-
prietie must be cut out of the monastery by the roote /
that is to say / that noo mynchyn presume to giue or receyue
any thyng without the comanndement of the abbasse / ne
haue any thyng propre / that is to say / by noo maner of wyse
noo maner of thyng / nother boke / nother tables / poyntell /
ne no other thyng earthly / for so moche that to theym it is
not lefull / to haue their owne bodys / nother their owne wyl-
les in their owne power. But they must oonly truste / to ha-
ue all maner of thyngs necessarye / of the mother of the mo-
nastery. Neyther it is leefull for theym / to haue any all ma-
ner of thynges which the abbasse hath not gyuen to them /
or of hir certeyne knowlege expressly and specially bathe
suffred theym to haue. And all thynges must be vnto them
incomune / as it is wrytten / Nother any of theym shall call /
any thyng hir owne / or presume or suppose anye thyng
to be hir owne. And if any mynchin be espyed to delyte or to
haue pleasure in this mozte cursed vice of ppriete / let hir be
monyfshed ons or t wyse / and if she doo not then amende /
let hir be put to correction and regulacite of discipline.

¶ The. xxxiiii. chapter sheweth whether every
Mynchyn shall equally receyue the thynges
that be necessary for them

As it is wreten diuision was made to euery oon of
the disciples and apposteles of christ / as euery of the
had nede. where we say not (as god forbed we sholde) that
any respecte be had in the acceptyng of the persons. But
that cōsideraciō be had of their necessite. wherfore she that
nedethe lesse: let hir thanke god / and be not myscontent / if an
other haue more. She that nedeth more / let hir submyt and
humble hir selfe for hir infirmite / and be not proude of the
pitie and cōpassion / that is shewed vnto hir. And so shall all
the membres be in reste and peace. And before all thynges
let it be seen that no sparke of grudgyng appere in any oon
of them / for any cause / in any maner of worde or toke. And
if any mynchyn be espyed in this faute / let hir be subd'ed to
more strait punishment of discipline.

¶ The. xxxv. chapitre treateth of the
wekely kychnynners.

Sistres shall soo doo seruyce eche to other / that none
be excused from thoffice of the kychin / except it be so /
that any be let / eyther by sekenes or els by some cause of gre-
at profyte / for therby is purchased a great rewarde / to them
that be feble and weked / shalbe ministred helpe / soucour / &
cōfort of other / to thentent that they doo not their busines /
with an euill wyll / but all shall haue helpe / cōforte / and so-
cour / after as the congregacion is / and after the site and set-
tyng of the place. If the couent be great / the abbasse shalbe
excused of the kychnyn / and suche other as we haue aboue-
sayd / that be occupied in thynges of more profyte. But the

residue shall doo seruyce to other in loue and charyte. She
that goth out of hir offyce / at the wekes ende vppon the sa-
terdaye / shall make all thynges clene. She shall washe the
clothes with the which hir sisters wypp their handes & their
fete. The feete of all the couēt / as well shall she washe that
goth out of offyce as she that entreth into the offyce. She that
goth out of office / shall she we & delyuer all the vesselles & vtes-
siles of hir office / to the celleresse / clene & soude / the whiche /
the celleresse ageyn shall she we & delyuer to hir that entreth
into the offyce / so that she may knowe / what that she dely-
uereth / & what she receyuih. ¶ The seruitours by the weke
which be called hebdomadar / soon houre before the refectiō
of the couēt / shall take a morsell of brede / & a draught of drinke
besydes their dutie / to theent that they may doo seruyce
to their sisters at meale / without grudge & greuous labour
yet vppō solēpne dayes / the sayd wekely seruitours shall
take pacience / and abyde tyll the laste masse be doone. The
sayd wekely seruitours / as well she that entreth / as she that
goth out / by and by in the quere when matyns or laudes be
ended vppon the sonday / shall prostrate them selfe before all
their sisters / desyringe them to pray for theym / They that
goe out of their offyce shall say this verse. Benedict⁹ es do-
mine deus qui adiuuisti me et consolatus es me. whiche is
thus moche to say. Blessed art thou lord god / which haste
helped me and comforted me. She whiche thries sayde / she
shall receyue a Benediction / and soo departe. And then she
that shall entre / shall followe and say / Deus in adiutorium
meum intende : domine ad adiuuandum me festina. The
whiche is in englyshe. Gracious god intende to warde my
soucoure / good lord make spede to helpe me. And that thrie
es shall be repeted of theym all. And after a benediction she
muste entre hir offyce.

¶ The xxxvi. chapter treateth of syke
sisters.

There muste good hede be taken to the susters that be
seke and diseased / byfore and a boue all thyng / and
as ye wolde doo yowr duetie and seruyce vnto chryste so shal
ye vnto them / for chryste saythe. I was seke / and ye dyd vy-
sit me / and agayne / what so euer ye dyd to oon of the leeste
of these my seruants / to me ye dyd it. But suche seke susters
muste consyder / that seruice is done vnto them / in the wo-
shyppe and honoure of god. And let theym not wery their
susters whiche minister and dothe seruice vnto them / with
importunite or demaundyng things superfluose / And yet
suche seke persones must be forborne pacyently / for by the
reason of theym / a more bountefull rewarde is purchased.
Therfore thabbasse must chesely take hede / that they suffre
no dammage thurgh neglygence / To the whiche susters /
beinge seke / there shalbe deputed a certeyne chambze / and
also oon to serue theym whiche is both dzedynge god / and
also diligēt & quycke / The vse of bathes / shal be offred vnto
seke susters / as often as shalbe expedient / but to them that
be hole / and namely yonge persones / it shalbe sildome graun-
ted. Al so eatynge of fleshe / may be graunted all way / to su-
che as be seke and feble / for their more spedy recouery. And
after that they be amended / then must they all abstayne fro
fleshe / as they were wonte to doo. The abbasse muste haue
asinguler cure and charge / that the seke susters be not neg-
ligently seen to / of the celleresse and seruitours / for vnto hir
charge it belongeth what so euer faute / offēce / or negligen-
ce is done by hir disciples.

**The. xxxvii. chapiter treateth of olde
men and children.**

Though the nature of mankynde of it selfe be prone ap-
pliant / and redy vnto mercy and compassion of these

agys/that is to say of olde folkes/and yonge chyldre/neuere
the lesse for a more suerte / by cause all persons both not vse
these naturall compassions / we woll that also thauctore
of these Rule shall prouyde and see for theym / to the entent
that in no wyse they lacke / & be destitute of their necessaris
wekenes of nature muste be alway consydered in theym / &
therfore they shall not be bounde to the strayghtnes of the
Rule/as tochyng their fedynge/but there must be had to wa
rdes them a good consyderacion /and let them preuent the
houres/lymitted by the Rule.

CThe. xxxviii. chapter treateth of
the wekely rede.

At the table of the susters/ whil they fede: there may
want no lecture. whoo so catcheth a boke in hir han
de/ shall take vppon hir to rede at all auētures / But she that
shall rede the hole Weke/ muste entre the sonday/ the which
so enterynge / after masse and after she hath receyued the
blessed sacrament of the aulter / must desyre all hir susters to
to pray for hir / that god kepe hir frome the spirite of wayne
gloze. And this versle shall she sayde in the quere thryes of all
the couent/ so that she that entreteth / doo begynne it sayenge.
Domine labia me aperies: et os meum annuntiabit laudē
tuam. whiche is to saye / Good lord open thou my lyppes /
and my mouth shall she we fourthe thy laude & praylynge/
and thus after a benediction receyued / she shall entre to wa
rde hir lecture. And depe and profunde sylence shall be kept
at the table/ soo that the wysperynge or voyce of noo person
there be harde/ but oonly of the rede. Souche thing as be
necessary to theym that ete and drynke / the susters shall soo
redely minister eche to other / that none of theym haue nede
to aske or call for any thyng. And if so be they nede ought/

let them aske it rather by the sounde of some maner of signe
or tokyn/ than by any voyce / and to the entent there be noone
occasion gyuen of any euill temptacion/ none of them shall
presume to talke any thyng there eyther of the lecture / or
of any other thyng/ except peradventure the prioress wolde
breuely declare ought/ for the edyfyenge of hir susters/ She
that redeth for the weke / shall take a morsell of brede and a
draught of drynke before she begynne to rede / for the more
suertie of the holy comunion/ and lesse it shold be a payne to
hir to cōtynue so longe fastinge. Afterwarde she shall take
refection with them that be hebdomadarys in the kychyn/
and seruitours in the refectorie. The susters shall not rede
nor synge indifferētly by order/ but oonly they that can beste
to the edyfyenge of the houres.

Che. xxxix. chapter treateth of the mesure
of meate.

We thynke that in all moneths of the yere . ii. diuerse
maners of meates be sufficient / to the dayly re-
fection / as well at the. vi. houre of the day / that is
to say/ at none vppon etinge dayes/ as at the. ix. houre / vppō
fastyng dayes/ in all monethes of the yere / and that for the
diseases of dyuerse persones / to the entent / that she whiche
pauenture may not eate of that oon/ may eate of that other.
Therefore two maner of meates well dressed and seasoned/
shalbe sufficient to all the susters / and if any oon of the sayd
two meates / be appules/ herbes/ or pease / let them then ha-
ue the thyrde meate/ brede of a pounde in wayght/ shall suf-
fice to oon of theym for a daye / and that whether they take
but oon refection / or elles dyne and suppe. And if they shall
suppe / the thirde parte of the same pounde of brede / shalbe
Reserued by the Celleresse/ to be deliuered to hir Supper.

And if the labour of the sisters be great: it shalbe in the discrecion and power of the abbasse / when it shalbe expedient som what to encrease their porcion / surfettes alwayes let a wyde that a mynchyn neuer fall vnto indigestion byfore she be ware / for nothynge is more cōtagiouse and contrarie to a chrysten man or woman than surfet: or dronkenes / as our lord sayth. Se that your bodis be not ouercom in surfet or dronkenes / But vnto damaselles and childre yonge in age / the quatite abouesayd shall not alwayes be kept & mustrid but lesse then to theym that be elder / scarcite kept in all thynges. The etynge of flesshe of .iiii. footed bestes must alwayes be forborne of all mynchins / except theym alwayes that be feble or sick.

¶ The .xl. chapter treateth of the measure of drynke.

Everye person hathe a gyfte by him selfe of god / oon after oon maner / a nother astur a nother maner / And therfore the measure of meate and drynke for other persons (sayth seynt Benet) is set an ordred by vs / with som scrupulosityte and doubte. Not withstandynge we consyderynge the wekenes of theym that be diseased / thinke verely / that hemma the which is nygh abowtes a mydes in the Itali / on toonge / a pynte in the frenche / and the Englysche toonges (which be nyghe by all oon measure) suffyseth to every person in wyne for oon daye. But they to whome god graunteth / that they may suffre abstinence of lesse drynke / may well knowe that they shall haue their rewarde accordyngly. And if the necessite of the place / or great labour / or elles the great hete of sommer woll require more. Let it stode in the wyll and arbytrement of the soueraygne / regardynge amonges all thynges / that repleccion or dronkenes: vndre myne theym not before they be ware. All thoughe we rede

that wyne ought in no wyse to be the drynke of mynchyns
yet for as muche as in our dayes / that thyng canot be per-
swaded vnto theym / at the leest / let vs graunt and obserue
this / that we drynke not to our full and saciate / but scarcely
and soberly / for wyne causith / yea them that be ryght wyse
for to erre and goo out of the way of good lyuyng / and the
same reason to chynge sobernesse / is to be vnderstonde / not
oonly of wyne / but also of ale / bere / and all other drynkes /
But where the pouerty of the place copelleth / that the me-
sure aforesayde cannot be hadde / but muche lesse / or els no-
thyng at all / let them thanke god that their dwell / & groue
ch not at it / for this we warne / counsayll and exhor-
te aboue all thyng / that susters leede their lyue to gydder with-
out grutchyng.

Che. xli. chapiter she weth at what houres
the susters shall take their refection.

From the holy feest of Easter vnto witsontyde / the
susters shall goo to dyner at the .vi. houre of the daye
whiche is after the Englyshe rekenyng abowtes an houre
before the mydday / & sope i the euynyng. And fro wits-
ontyde thurgh out all the somer / if the mynchyns haue no la-
boure in the felde / or if they be not troubled with ouer mo-
che hete i somer / the vppō wednisdays & frydays they shall
faste vnto che. ix. houre of the day / which is about .ii. of the
clocke in the after none / vppō other dayes they shall dyne at
the .vi. houre of the day / which .vi. houre if they haue busi-
nes in the feelde / or elles the hete of somer be feruent / shalbe
cōtinued & kept / also the wednesdaye and frydaye / if thab-
basse so woll dispoise & ordere it. And yet in all dispensaciōs /
moderacions / and lycences / the abbasse must haue suche re-
garde & consideraciōs that hir sustres sowles may be saued /
and that that they shall doo / may be doo without grudge

or murmure resonable. From the Idus of Septembꝛe / vnto Shrouetyde / they shall take their refeccion at. ix. of the day / In lent tyll Easter they shall eate at the cūyn tyme / and euensong shall soo be doo / that at their meate / they shall nede no lyght of candel / but all shalbe ended by day lyght. Also at all tymes / be it soper or other refeccion / so shall the houre be moderate / that all thynges be doon by daylyght.

CThe. xlii. chapiter sheweth that after complayne all the Sisters shall kepe silence.

All seasons mynchins ought to doo their deuoure to kepe silence / and chesly in the houres of the nyght. And therfore at all tymes / beyng fastyng daye or etyng day / If it be etyng day / anone as they aryse from soper / they muste sit all to gydder in oon place / and oon of them muste rede collacions / that is to say / a boke called collacions / or els *Vitas patrum* / or els som other boke that is apt to edifie and doo good to the herers. They shall not rede the bokes of the olde lawe / or the bokes of kynges / for vnto them that be feble of vnderstōding / it shal not be fruteful not to hir that redes scripture i suche an houre. At other tymes they may be red. If it be fasting day / the withi a lyttell whyle after that euensong is doon / anon they shall cōme to the lecture of the collacion / as we haue sayde before / and. iiii. or. v. leues ther of redde / or elles as moche as oon houre wyl permit so that all the couēt in the meane tyme may cōme to gydder / if any of them be then occupied in any maner of thyng / cōmitted vnto hir / she must forth with leue of / and cōme to the couēt / and so all they gaderyd to gydder in oon shall make an ende & execute cōplene. And departyng frome cōplene it shall not be lefull to any of theym after ward to speke any worde to

any person. And if any of them be founde to haue broke this
Rule of silence / let hir be subdued to a strait punishment
except that necessite of gestes com vppon / or els perauenture
thabbasse comitteth to any of the som what to be doon.
And yet that same thyng must be doon with great grau-
te/moderacion and with honest and good behauour.

CThe. xliii. chapter is of them that come late
to the seruice of god and to grace byfore they
goo to mete.

AT the houre of diuine seruice / anone as the signe is
harde or the bell ronge / all thinges left a parte what
soeuer shall fortune to be in hande / they must renne with all
spede that may be. Howe be it / it must be doo with grauite /
soo that lewde behauour / or lyghtnesse be not founde among
ges them / for nothyng shalbe preferred the seruice of all
myghty god. And if any com to the nocturne in the nyght
after glosa patri of Venite / the which psalme / we wol (sayth
seynt Benet) shalbe prolonged and song treatably all way /
for the same cause / she shall not stonde in hir orde i the que-
re / but she muste stonde laste of all / or elles in a place aparte
which thabbasse shall ordeyne for suche slouthfull and neg-
ligent persones / so that she may be seen of the abbasse or els
of all the couet / vnto the tyme that the seruyce of god be en-
ded / she take repētance with open satisfacciō. And therfore
we haue iuged the to stode in the lowest place or els a parte
a syde / to thentēt that whyl they be seen of all their sisters /
at the leeste for very shame they must amēde. For if soche a
flowe pson shold remayne without the quere / pauēture su-
che noon she myght be / that wolde take hir rest or slepe / or sit
without at large or els gyue hede to fables therfore let noon
ocasiō be gyue to the Deuill in hir. But let hir entre into the
quere / to thentent that she lese not all / & that she may make

amendes for the resydw. At the houres of the day/she that cometh to diuine seruice after Deus in adiutorium/and gloria patri of the furste psalme/whiche is sayde after Deus in adiutorium/acco2dyng to the ordenance abouesayde. Let hir stonde in the laste place of the quere/nether she shall presume to be accompanied with the that synge/vnto the tyme she doo satisfaction / except perauenture thabbasse gyue licence vnto hir by suffraunce/so that yea she beunge guylte doo satisfie therfore. At the houre of refection she that comethe not byfore grace / that they may all to gydder say grace and pray / and that they all may goo to the table to gydder / she that by hir owne negligēce and faute doth not so come/Let hir be rebuked therfore vnto the seconde tyme. If then she doo not amēde. Let hir not be suffered to be at the table amonges them. but sequestrate and let hir be diuorced from the company of theyn all / and let hir ete alone / hir porcyon of wyne and other drynke (except water) takyn a waye from hir/vnto the tyme she doo satisfiō and amēde/Lyke punishment shall she suffer that is not present at the grace / which is sayde after mete. And we woul that none presume to take mete and drynke byfore and after the houre limited And if any of theyn refuse any thyng that is offred to hir/ by the suffraygne/the next tyme that she desireth ought/she shall take that she furste refused/or els she shall nothing haue/till she make a conuenient amēdes.

CThe. xliiii. chapter treateth of those that be excommunicat/howe they shall do satisfaction.

She that for a more greuous offence is excommunicate frome the quere and from the table. whan the seruice of god is soonge in the quere muste lyghe downe byfore the Quere doore sayenge nothyng / but oonly beynge prostrate grouelyng with hir hedde to wchynge the Erth

at the fete of all hir sisters / comynge out of the queer / and
that shall she doo with contynuaunce / vnto the abbasse iuge
that she haue doon satisfaccion / which mynchyn / whan by
the comaundement of thabbasse / she doth come into the cha-
piter howse / shal prostrate hir selfe byfore the fete of the saye
de abbasse / and after ward at the fete of all hir sisters / desy-
rynge them to pray for hir . And than if thabbasse comaun-
de she shalbe receyued into the queere / in what order or degre
that thabbasse woll decerne and limite / Soo that she pre-
sume not to begynne psalme / lecturne / or any other thyng
in the queere / except thabbasse gyue a newe comaundement.
And at euery houre whan the seruice of god is soonge / she
shall prostrate hir selfe vppon the erth i the place where she
stondeth / and soo shall she doo satisfaccion in the queere / tyll
thabbasse comaunde hir to cease : they that be excommunicate
for lyght fautes oonly from the table / shall doo satisfaccion
in the queere / vnto the tyme the abbasse gyue other comaun-
dement. This shall they allway doo tyll the thabbasse gyue
them there absolution and say that it is sufficient.

CThe. xlv. chapiter treateth of theym that
doth amysse in the queere.

If any mynchyn whā she begynneth a psalme / respo-
de / anteme / or lectourne / make anye faute / excepte by
dewe satisfaccion / there befoze all hir sisters she doo sub-
mytte hir selfe / let hir be put to a moze punishmet / And that
bycause she wolde not be corrected with mehenes that : that
she trespaleth thurghe neglygence. But chyldezen for suche
a faute muste be bette.

CThe. xlvj. chapiter treateth of thoos which in
any maner of other thynges doo offende

If any Wyndhyll whyles she is in any labour in the
kychyn in the celler/in the executinge thospyce of a ser-
uitoure in the bakehouse/in the garden / or in any maner of
occupacion whyles she labourythe / where so euer it be / doo
ought a mysse / or breke any thyng / lese any thyng / or elles
make anye excesse in any maner of place / if she come not by
and by before the abbasse or the couent and of hir owne free
wyll doo satisfactiō 3 shewe hir trespass before it be know-
en by som other / let hir be subdued to a gretter amēdes / and
if the trespass be oonly to the hurte of hir owne soule and
secrete / she shall shewe it oonly to some holsome and aged
goostly fader / whiche can cure and make hole not oonly his
owne offenses and sykenesse / but others also and neuer dis-
close nor publyshe them.

**The. xlvii. chapter treateth of thappoyntment
of the houre of diuine seruice**

It apperteigneth to the charge of thabbasse to shewe
the houre of the seruyce of all myghty god / bothe by
daye and by nyght. Ether muste she doo it hir selfe or elles
comitte this charge to som dyligent sustre soo that all thin-
ges be ended incōueniēt houres. They shall begyn psalmes
or antems euery of theym except the abbasse by ordre / or to
whome so euer the cōmaundement be gyuen. There may
none presume to synge or rede aught / but she that may soo
well doo and performe it / that the herers may be the better
therby / whiche thinge she muste doo with humilite / graui-
te / and fere / and by the abbasse cōmaundement or elles not.

**The. xlviii. chapter speketh of dayly
hande labour.**

Idenes is an vtter and extreme enemy of the soule /
and therfore certeyne tymes sisters must be occupied

in labour of the hande / and certayn tymes in redyng god-
li lectours or i good meditaciōs And therefore we thinke bo-
the the sayd tymes in this wyse to be well ordred / that is to
say that fro Easter vnto the kalēdas of October in the morn-
yng fro the firste houre of the day vnto almoste the.iiii.of
the daye let theym labour aboute suche thynges as be ne-
cessary. And from the.iiii.houre of the day vnto almost the
syxte houre they must gyue them selfe to redyng. And after
the. vi. houre rysyng from the table / they shall reste a wyle
in their bedd / with all silence / or els if the woll gyue hir selfe
to redyng / let hir so rede softly bi hir selfe / that she trouble no-
ne other. And the houre of none must be executed at the hal-
fe houre before the. viii. houre of the daye. And then agayne
what so euer is beste to be doon / let them labour in it vnto
euynsonge tyme. And if the necessite of the place or els pos-
uerte compelleth that they muste be occupied theym selfe /
aboute the gatheringe in of Corne / they may not take it he-
uely nor be greued there with / for than they be very trewe
mynchins / whan they lyue with the labour of their owne
handes / as dyd our faders and the appostles / notwithstanding
dyinge all thynges shalbe be doon in measure and with dis-
crecion / by cause of them that be feble and weke in bodye or
spirite. From the kalēdas of October vnto shrouetyde they
shall gyue theym selfe vnto redyng / tyll the seconde houre
of the day be full. And at the seconde houre of the daye they
shall execute the thirde houre. And then vnto the. ix. houre
of the day every of theym shall labour aboute hir busines /
whiche is inioyned vnto hir. Than the firste signe of the. ix.
houre stricken / every oon of theym shall departe frome hir
worke / that they may be redy / whan the. ii. sygne stryketh.
And after they haue dined / they shall gyue som to redyng
of lessons / and som to redyng of psalms. In the dayes of
lent from the mornyng vnto the thirde houre of the daye /
full they must gyue them selfe to redyng / and from that ty-
me tyll the. x. houre of the day full / they must labour in su-

the occupacion as is committed vnto theym/ in the whiche dayes of lent / euery of theym shall haue by her selfe a booke oute of the lybrary whych booke she shall rede from the beginninge to the endinge by order. and the same bookes must be deliuered vnto them at shrouetyde/ Byfore all thyngys oon o2 two susters of the eldest i the religiō shalbe deputed whych shall goo aboute the monastery at all soche tymes & seasons as there susters be at there redinge/ & ouersee theym lesse perauenture som suster be founde slothfull / whych gyueth hir selfe to idlenes & tellynge of tales / and is not myndyd to wardy redyng. And so is not oonly vnpytable to hir selfe/ but also she disturbeth and letteth other/ Suche oon if she (as god forbide) be founde / let hir be rebuked ones and the secōde tyme if she do not so amēde / let hir be submitted to correcciō regular/ in suche wyse as other by hir may haue cause to be effrayde. Nether oon suster shall accompany hir selfe with a nother / but in houres and tymes conuenient. Cyppon the sonday they shall all gyue thē selfe to redinge/ except those whiche be deputed to dyuers offices. And if any of them be so neglygent and slothfull/ that she wylnot/ o2 elles she cannot gyue hir selfe to meditacion o2 to redyng/ let some maner of busines be inioyned vnto hir/ to thentent that she benot idle / The susters that be feble / o2 elles be tender/ o2 haue be delicatly brought vp/ to theym suche occupacion o2 busines shalbe comitted / that nether they be idle / ne yeat oppressed with ouer moche laboure / where throughe they shulde forsake the monastery / whiche weakenes & tendrenesse muste be cōsideret by thabbasse after hir discreciō.

The .xlix. chapter treateth of the obseruing of lent.

Though at all tymes a mynchin in hir lyuynge ought to kepe the obseruāce of lent/ yet so moche as that vertue of that cōtinuall obseruāce is but i fewe persons / therefore we counsell that they kepe their lyfe in the dayes of lent /

with all clēnesse/that is to say/that they in those holy dayes/
clense and washe cleane a way / all their negligences of other
tymes paste. The which is the doon acceptably/as it ought
to be / when they kepe their Selfe from all maner of vices
and gyue their diligēce to prayer with wepyng/ to redyng/
to cōpunction of herte/and to abstinence. Therefore in those
dayes of lent/let vs encrease some thinge in our selfe / ouer &
aboue the duty of our custumeable seruyce/ which we were
wont to do/and pray at other tymes/that is to say/ addyng
specyall and pryuate prayers/ with more abstinence of mete
and drynke. And let euery oon in those dayes of lēt offre vnto
to god of hir owne fre wyll/ with gostly Joy / som thinge a
boue hir custumable seruice or dutie / and aboue the measur
e to hir cōmaunded / that is to say/let hir withdraue from
hir body/som what of meate & drynke/of slepe / of spekyng/
of shoffyng / & tryfelinge / and with Joy of a spirytual des
yre/let hir longe for the feste of Easter. Howe be it that selfe
thyng that any of them doth aboue hir custumable duty/
she must shewe it to hir abbasse. And with hir wyll & pray
er it muste be doon / for what so euer be doon without the
wyll and leue of hir spirytual moder/shalbe accompted pre
sumpcion and vayne glory/and to no rewarde. Therefore all
thyng muste be doon with the wyll of the abbasse.

Che .i. chapter spekeh of susters that labourth
farre from the quere.

Susters whiche be ferre fro the monastery or oratory
in laboure/and may not com to the quere in a cōueni
ent houre/ if the abbasse do perceyue it so to be of trewthe/ let
them the there do their dewty vnto god / where as they la
boure/ with goodlye dēte and fere / knelyng vppon their
knees / Also the houtes of goddes seruyce accustomed and
appoynted/ may not be forget of theym that be sent forth in
iorneyes / But as moche as they may / they must do their dy

wyne seruyce and negligent / not to pay the duty of their seruice in dede and conuenient tymes.

Che.li.chapter speketh of susters whiche goith forth but no ferre Iorney.

Susters that goith forth in any maner of messayge / & truste to retorne to the monastery the same day / shall not presume ne take vppon theym to eate without the monastery / all though they be desyred of any person / except perauenture they haue a comaundement of thabbasse / And if they do other wyse / let them be excommunicate.

Che.lii.chapter treateth of the quere of the monastery.

The oratory / whiche is as moche to say as the place of praye muste be in dede & in effecte as it is called / that is to say that nothing erthly may there be doon / layed / or left / that dothe not appetygne to the seruice of god. Whan the seruice of god is ended / all the couent muste goo out with silēce / & do reuerēce vnto god / to thentent that a suster / which perauenture woll bede summe peculier or specyall prayers of hir ppyuate deuocion / be not letted thorough the vngoodly be hauoure of a nother / and if so be that a nother also wolde pray secretly by hir selfe / let hir com in with all silēce / & pray not with a lowde voyce / but with teres and full intencion and enticenesse of herte. Therfore she that occupieth not hir selfe aboute souche busines of prayers & meditacions / may not be suffred / after the seruice of god is doon / to make any tarpenge in the oratory / as is abouesayde / lesse that a nother suffer impediment by hir.

Che.liii.chapter treateth of hospitalite and the maner of decryuinge of gesses.

f.iii.

The liii. chapter treateth oonly of hospitalite / & of the
receyuinge & charytable entertaynyng of gesses and
pylgrimes / which for many icōuenientes that myght there
vppon ensue / Ipeccally by muche cōuersacion with men cā
not conueniently nor without great perill of sowles be exe-
cuted nor pformed amonges mynchins / after the forme ex-
pressed I the same chapit / & neuerthelesse to the entēt that they
may knowe the deuoute & charitable maner of hospitalyte /
& the receyuinge of gesses that monkes be bounden to. And
that no parte of seynt Benett's rule be by vs conceyled or hid
for them / we haue therfore translate the sayde chapter ap-
plyenge it to the monkes oonly / accorbyng to the originall
text as follo weth / without any mēcion makinge of mīchls /
seige that they cānot cōueniētly as a boue is sayd obserue it.

All gesses and estraungers cōmyng to the monaste-
ry shalbe receyued in lyke maner as chryste shold be /
for he shall say I was a gesse / and ye receyued me / And to all
maner of people due reuerence shall be shewed / howe be it
chefely to men of our owne sayth or religion / & peregrines /
Therfore as sone as it is shewed that a gesse is cōme / the
soueraygne or suche oon as hath the offyce of the hospitular
must goo agaynst him with the shewe & demonstracion
of all cherfull & charytable maner / And furste of all / let them
goo into the oratory & pray to gydder / and then salute them
selfe with the kyss of peace / whiche kyss shalnot be offred /
except they haue first prayed to gydder / for excheuinge of il-
lusiōs that cōmeth of the deuyll / In that same salutaciō all
humilite must be shewed. When gesses com & goo / chryste
whiche is receyued in them / muste be worshipped in them /
with submission of the hed / or elles with prostracion of all
the body / vppō the erth. Gess on receyued must be brought
vnto prayer / & after ward let the soueraygne sit with them /
or elles suche a broder whom the soueraygne wyll cōmañ-
de. The lawe of all myghty god shalbe redde byfore the sa-
me gesse / for gostely edificacion / & after that let the gesse ha

ne all the there that may be. The soueraygne shall breke his
faste for a straungers sake / except it be so great a day of faste
that it may not be broken / that is to say a faste vowed / or com-
maunded by the church / but the remenat of the bretherne
shall prosecute & continue the custom of fastinge. The ab-
bot shall gyue water to the estrangers handes. And as well
the Abbot as all the hole couent shall washe the fete of the
gestes & estrangers / whiche doon they shall say this verse /
Suscepimus de⁹ misericordia tua in medio templi tui / that
is to say. Lorde god we haue receyued thy mercy i the mid-
des of thy temple. The receyvinge of pore people & peregrin-
nes muste principally with all diligence be regarded / for in
them more than in other churche is receyued / for as for ryche
men / the fete & drede of theym requyrezeth of force / honour &
reuerence to be doo vnto them. The kychin of the abbot & of
gestes whiche is all oon / shalbe disseuered fro the couent ke-
chin to the intent that gestes cominge vppon at vncertayne
houres / which neuer fayleth in a monastery / shall not trou-
ble the bretherne of the couet. Into the which kychin. ii. bre-
therne shall entre for a yere / which can & may well doo that
offyce. To whom after as nede shall reqre: there shall be mi-
nistred solace & succurre of other / so that they may doo their
seruice without grudge. And ageyne whan they haue lesse
to do in the kychin / then let them goo to suche busines as is
commaunded vnto them / & not only in this office of the kitchin
but also in all other offices of the monasterye this consyde-
ration muste be hadde / that whan they nede solace and hel-
pe they muste haue it / & ageyne whan they haue nothyng
to do in their offices: they must obey their superior in that he
will elles commaunde. And also a broder whose so wile dre-
deth god singularly / must haue a house assigned to hi / to re-
ceyue gestes to / wherin shall be beddes made sufficiently /
& the house of all myghty god / that is to say the house assign-
ed for hospitalite must be wisely ordered by wise persons.
But no Brother in no maner of wise shall accompanye

him selfe / or holde cōmunicacion w^{it} a geste / except he haue
lycēce / or be cōmaunded / And if he mete and se any gestes
or esttraungers / a salutation nichely (as is a boue sayd) gyue
vnto them & blessinge desyred / he shall passe by / saynge that
it is not lefull for hym / to speke w^{it} a geste or a straunger.

Che. liiii. chapter sheweth that a mynchin
ought not to receyue letters or tokyns.

In no wyse it shall be lawfull to a mynchin to receyue
letters / tokens / or any other small gyftes frome fader
other or moder / or from any pson / or elles oon of thē from a
nother amonges them selfe / nether to sēde any such thing
without the leue and also the cōmaundement of thabbasse.
And if any maner of thinge be sent vnto a mynch from hir
fader or moder / she shall not take vppō hir selfe to receyue it /
except it be shewed to the abbasse afore / And if the abbasse
cōmaunde that it be receyued / it shall be in thabbasse power
to whom she wyll cōmaunde the sayd mynchin / after that
she hath it so receyued to gyue or deliuer it. And the suster
to whom that thinge was sēt / shall not be therewith misco
tent / lesse the deuyl haue therby occasion to warde her / and
she that presumethe other wyse than thus / shall be submit
ted to regular discipline.

Che. lv. chapter treateth of the rayment of the myn
chins and the houses of office belongyng to the same.

CArmentes & clothinge shalbe gyuen vnto the sisters /
after the qualite of the place where they dwell / or af
ter the temperatnes of the ayer / for in colde regyons is mo
re neede / in hote regions lesse neede / And thus consyderacion
resteth oonly in thabbasse. And as for the coloure or cur
nes of the clothe / & of all other apparell ganerally / the min
chins shall not grudge nor cōplayne / but be content with su

the cloth as may be gotten i the puise or coultre / where they dwell and with that cloth that is courtesse / and that may be bought best chepe. Thabbasse shal se for the mesure of their garmentes / that they be not to short for the werers / but miserable. They that take newe garmentes / shall deliuer awaye their olde by and by / to be put in the vestiarye for pore people. It is sufficient for a mynch to haue two garmentes of euery sorte / by cause of nyghtes and for washynge of the same / And what so euer and aboue the sayde two garmentes that is superfluous and muste be take awaye. Also shoes & what so euer other olde thyng there be / they shall deliuer them whan they receyue newe / as touchinge their Bedstuf / a mat / a stamyn / a couerlet / and a bolster be sufficient. The whiche beddes muste be often tymes serched of thabbasse / lesse the mynchins take or kepe any thyng / that thabbasse is not priuey vnto / And if ought be founde with any of theym / that she hath not receyued of the abbasse / let hir be submittid to the moste greuous discipline. And to the entent that this vyce of propriete may be plucked vp by the rote / all thynges necessary muste be gyuen by thabbasse to the minchins / as well garmentes / booke / and instrumentes for their crafte and occupaciōs / so that all excuses of necessity may be taken awaye. yet the same abbasse muste alwaye consyder the sentence of thactes of the appostels that distribution was made to euery oon of them / as necessity required. And therefore the abbasse muste cōsyder the infirmytes of theym that lacketh / and not the euyll wyll of theym that be enuyous / howe be it in all hir iugemētes / let hir well thiſke / That after hir dedes she shall be agayne rewarded of almyghty god. ¶ Other thynges there be in this chapter / concerninge the garmentes of monkes / whiche by cause they be not mete nor cōuenient for women we haue in this oure translacion made no mencion of them.

¶ The. lvi. chapter treateth of the table of thabbasse.

Ababbasse muste allway haue at hir table peregrines
and gesses / ho'wre beit as often as there is no gesses /
thabbasse may call vnto hir whome she luste of hir susters /
but she shall euer take hede / that oon o' too of the eldeste in
the religion / be lefte with the susters for their discipline.

**The. lviij. chapter treateth of the artificers
of the monastery.**

If there be any artificers in the monastery / they shall
doo their occupation with all humilite / so that they
haue firste the comaundement o' leue of the abbasse / And if
any of theym be proude for the conninge of the crafte that
she hath byfore a nother / bycause she semeth to doo soom pe-
fyte to the monastery aboute other / suche oon must be with-
drawen and sequestred from that crafte / & shall not goo to
it agayne / except thabbasse comaunde hir after that she ha-
the meked & submitted hir selfe / If any thinges of the war-
bes of thartificers be to be solde: they that shal haue the sale /
must se wysely / and be ware that there be no fraude / nether
in the worker / no: in the seller / no: no fraude doo to the mo-
nastery. And let theym all way remembre Ananie and Sa-
phire / lesse perauenture they and all other / which do any de-
ceyte in the goodes of the monastery / suffice lyke deth in their
soules / as the forsayd Ananie and Saphire suffred in their
bodies / that is to say sodeyne deth. In the pryses of all suche
stufte / the synne of couetouise muste viterly be exchued / and
therfore let it be solde somwhat better chepe / than it sholde
haue be of secular persons / to the intent that god may be glo-
rified in all thynges.

**The. lvij. chapter treateth of the maner & forme
of the receyvinge of susters into the monastery.**

Whan any person commethe newly to conuertyon
towards religiois / hyr enterynge shall not be ly-

ghly graunted to hir but as the appostell saythe / take ye a
good proufe / whether hir inward intent and desyre / com of
god or not. And therfore if suche oon comyng / doo perseuer
in hir desyre / & be perceyued to suffer paciently iniurys sayd
and doon vnto hir / and to be contemted with the difficultie
that is made for hir entrange by the space of. iiii. or. v. dayes /
and that she stonde stedfaste in hir petition / let hir be admit-
ted to entre / and then let hir be in the gessen chambze a fewe
dayes / and after ward let hir be in the chambze of the noui-
ces / where she shall cōtinue in meditation / and there eate
and drynke. And suche an aged suster shalbe deputed vnto
hir whiche is an apt person to wyne so wles / whiche shall
tenderly and diligently take hede vppon hir / and applye hir
selfe to vnderstōde / if she seke god verily without feyning /
& whether she be diligētly gūm to the seruyce of all myghty
god / to obediēce / & to abyde & suffre rebukes. harde thinges
& sharpe thynges must be declared vnto hir / by the whiche
men goo vnto god / & if she promyse to cōtinue in hir sted-
fastnes / thē after to w moneths be passed / let this rule be red-
de vnto hir by order / and these wordes say vnto hir. Schol-
de and loke / This is the lawe vnder the whiche thou wylt
contineue and doo seruyce / If so be thou mayste kepe it / en-
tre / If thou mayste not / goo thy waye wyles thou arte fre.
And if she contyneue styll / Then lette hir be brought into
the forsayde chambze of nouices / And agayne lette hir be
proued in all patience. And after the space of. vi. monethes
let the Rule be redde vnto hir agayne / That she may well
knowe whereto she entrethe. And if she stonde yeat in hir
purpose by the space of other. iiii. monethes / then after the
same. iiii. monethes / let this same rule be redde vnto hir a-
gayne / And if that she takynge with hir selfe a delibēraciō /
wylt promyse / that she wylt kepe all maner of thinges in the
rule / and obserue all thinges commaunded of hir superior /
then let hir be receyued into the couent / knowynge for cer-
teyn / that it is ordeyned by the lawe of the rule / that it may

not be lefull for hir fro that daye forthwarde / to goo out of
the monastery / nor to caste the yoke of the rule from hir necke
he / nor plucke hir necke out of the yoke of the rule / whiche
with soo longe a visement she myght byfore haue refused /
whan she shall be reseyued / she must in the quere / in the pre-
sence of all the couent / make a promisse of hir stabilitie / and
of the couersacion of hir maners / and obedience / byfore god
and his sayntes after the sayde rule / to the intent that at any
season when she doo other wyse / she may well knowe hir
selfe to be dāpned of all myghty god / whome she mocketh /
& scorneth / of the which hir promyse she must make a wy-
tyng to the name of the seynt / whose releyquys there restith /
and to the name of the abbassee there beyng p̄sent / The whi-
che wytyng she shall wyght with hir oʷne hande / or els
if she be not lerned therto / som other at hir desyre shall wy-
te it / and she shall signe it / and with hir honde ley it vppon
the aulter / and therewith begyn this verse *Suscipe me dñe*
secundū eloquī tuū et viuā : et ne confundas me ab expecta-
tione mea that is to say. Good lord receyue me after thyne
oʷne worde / and graunt me to lyue in the / and put me not
abacke from that that I lōke for & truste vnto / whiche verse
all the couēt muste repete thries / addyng to it *Gloria patri.*
Then she muste prostrate hir selfe to the fete of euery myn-
chyn / and desyre theym to pray for hir / And from that daye
forth she muste be accompted as oon of the couent. Goodes
if she haue any / eyther let hir byfore hir professiō distribute
them to poʷer people / or elles let hir by solempne and open
graunte / gyue them to the monastery / reseruinge nothyng
to hir selfe therof at all / for fro that day forth / she muste well
knowe / that she shall haue no poʷer of so moche / as of hir
oʷne bodye / Therefore anone in the quere : let hir be put out
of hir oʷne apperell / with the which she is clothed / and doo
on the clothes of the monastery. But the garmentes which
she is put out of / must be kept in the vestiarye / that if in any
tyme / through the intyng of the deuyl / she consent to goo

out of the monastery (as god for bede she shulde) then do-
ing of the clothes of the monastery/let hir be caste out in hir
olde array/so we be it that wytyngge whiche thabbasse re-
ceyued vpon the altare she shall not receyue agayne/ but it
musse be kept styll in the monastery.

CThe. lii. Chapter treateth of the children
of noble men and poure men.

If it fortune any noble man to offre his daughter vnto
god in the monastery/ if that chylde be withun lafull
ayge. hir fader and moder shall make the wytyngge which
we haue declared by fore. And with their oblaciō they shall
wrape the sayde wytyngge/ and the hande of the chylde in
the alter clothe/ and in that maner of wyse musse they offre
their chylde. And as for their goodes/ they shall promyse in
the same wytyngge with an othe/ that nether by them selfe
nor by any other person/ nor by no maner of way/ nor at any
tyme/ they shall any thyng geue to their sayde chylde/ nor
geue occasiō that she shall any thyng haue. Or truly if they
wyl not doo thus/ but they woll in any wyse som what ge-
ue vnto the monastery in almes for their owne soyle helth/
let theym make a graunte therof vnto the monastery/ refer-
ryng to them selfe (if they so woll) the vse and profit ther-
of duringe their lyues. And so euery way must be stopped
that no suspencion of propriete remaine to the childe/ by the
whiche she deceyuyd (as god for bede) myght peryshe/ whi-
che thyng we haue lerned by experience. And in lyke ma-
ner shall pouer men do for offeryng of their chylde. But
they that haue nothyng at all/ let theym make their wy-
tyngge without graunte of any thyng. And let theym offre
their doughter with their oblacion byfore wytnes.

CThe. lii. chapter treateth of secular prestes that
desyre to enter into religion in any monastery.

C. l.

Albeit that this. lx. chapter nor no parte thereof may
touche or concerne the congregacion of mynchins/
yet for the cause aboue reherſed i the other chapters of this
rule not to wchynge them / and ſpecially for the inſtruction
of ſom monkes meynly lettered / we haue traſlated the ſayd
de. lx. chapter i fourme folowing. ¶ If any preſte deſyre to
be receyued & takyn into the monaſtery / it ſhal not be lyght-
ly at the firſte deſyre graunted to him. So we be it if he cōti-
nually pſiſte in this his deſyre & ſupplicaciō / let him knowe
& be well aſſured / to be bounde to obſerue all the ſtrayctnes
of the rule / and that no maner of thinge ſhalbe to him ther-
of releaſed / according to the ſcripture. frēde or broder wher
fore came thou? Neuertheleſſe: he may be licenced to ſtonde
in order aſtur the abbot / and to gyue benediction / & to ſynge
maſſe / if ſo be that thabbot ſo cōmaunde. And elles beyng
not cōmaunded / let him in no wyſe preſume any thyng a-
boue a nother brother. But let him euer remembre that he
is ſubiect and bounde to regular obſeruance / and by the rea-
ſon of his order / let him the rather gyue all other example of
all mekenes & humylite / and if he be the cauſe of any goode
ordināce or order of any other good thyng in the monaſte-
ry / let him euer regarde that place and degre that he entred
into / when he came firſte into the monaſtery / and not that
place nor degre whiche for the reuerence of preſthod to him
was graūted. And alſo if any clarke not preſte of lyke deſy-
re / couet to be accept & aſſociat into the monaſtery / let him be
ſet in ameyne place / ſo that firſte he promyſe thobſeruacion
of the rule and his ſtabilitie in the ſame.

**¶ The. lxi. chapter treateth of mynchyns
ſtraungers.**

If a mynchin ſtraunger come from ſer contrey / if ſhe
wyll abyde in the monaſtery as a geſte / and be cōtent
with the cuſtome of the place as ſhe fyndeth / & with hit ex-

esse or superfluite trouble not the monastery / but utterly be
 content wth what so euer she fynde / let hir then be receyued for
 as longe tyme as she desyret^h / If she wth reason / charite &
 mekenes rebuke / or fynde in any defaulte in any thyng that
 is a myse in the monastery / thabbasse must handle & treat
 the mater wysely / for perauenture all myghty god hathe
 sent the same pson thydde to that intent. And if after ward
 the said mynchin wol stablyshe hir selfe there / hir wyll shall
 not be refused / especiallye for as moche as in the tyme that
 she hathe been there as a geste / hir lyfe myght well haue be
 knowen / and if she be founde wastfull or vicious in the ty
 me that she is there as a geste / then not alonly she muste not
 be associate to the body of the monastery / but also it must be
 honestly sayde vnto hir that she departe / lesse thoroughe hir
 wretchednes other be made the werse / And if she be not su
 che oon as is worthy to be put out / then not oonlye if she de
 syre it / she shall be receyued and associate to the couent / but
 also she shalbe desyred to hyde and cōtinue there / to then
 tent that by hir vertues / other may take example / or by hir
 good example other may the better be instructed. And in as
 moche as in euery place / we do seruice to oon lord & to oon
 kyng it is lesfull for thabbasse to set hir som what i abyggher
 place / if she perceyue that she be a pson worthy therto. The
 abbasse muste beware alway that she take not at any tyme
 a mynchin to continue in hir monasterye whiche is of an
 other known monastery / wth the consent of thabbasse of
 the same / or elles hir letters of cōmendacon / for it is writte
 that that thou wilt not haue doon to thy selfe / doo not thou
 to a nother.

¶ The. lxi. chapter treateth of monkes p^{ro}moted to
 presthod after their p^{ro}fession in the monastery.

If any abbot haue nede of a prest or deaco let the che
 sic oon of his owne monkes / which maybe worthy to
 take vppon him and vse that ord^{er} / the which brother after

G. ii.

that he be ordred/ let him be ware of all elacion and pryde/ & let him not presume to do no thynge/ but suche as shalbe commaunded by the abbot beinge well assured that for the dignite of his ordre/ he is the more bounde vnto regular lyfe and conuersacion. And also let him take hede/ that by the occasion of his presthod/ he forget not the obbedience and discipline of the rule/ but rather more and more encrease and profite in vertues and good liuinge to wardes god. But let him all way (except when he ministreth in the auter) regarde & remembre that place & come that he was in/ when he entred the monastery/ and if peradventure the abbot and the couent/ by oon assent for his great vertues and the merites of his lyfe/ wyll promote and exalte hym aboue his seniors/ yet let him knowe and consyder that he is neuer the lesse bounde to kepe & obserue the rule & preceptes ordeyned & assigned by the Deanes or suffraygues/ and if he woll otherwyle presume then let him be Iugged/ estimed/ & reputed/ not a preste/ but a rebell/ And if he after sundray monicions woll not reforme him selfe/ than let the bishop of the diocese haue knowelege therof/ And if he wyl not amende by the bishop/ then his offenses beinge manifeste and open/ let him be elect and expelled out of the monastery/ speecially if his contumacye & rebellion be suche that he woll not obey ne be subiecte to the rule. ¶ This the. lxxii. chapter in lyke wyle to wcheth not in any thynge the congregation of mynchins/ yet for lyke cause as we dyd the other chapters aboue reherfed/ we haue translate & insert it among the rules of the same mynchins.

¶ The. lxxiii. chapter speketh of the ordre of the couēt.

Mynchins shall kepe and continue their order and degree in the monastery/ as the tyme of their conuersion and the deseruing and merites of their lyuinge/ doth require/ & as the abbasse wyll deserue & order/ allbeit as the abbasse muste be so discrete and circumspecte/ that she in that behalfe

feowble not to the flocke comitted vnto hir. For She may
not as she had an absolute power & free wyll ouer hir susters
es/ order or dispose any thyng wrongfullye. But she must
remember alway that of all hir iugementes and dedes she
muste gyue accountis to all myghty god. Therefore accor
dyng to the order that thabbasse doth/ or elles to that / that
the susters haue the selfe by order of their couersio & pfectio
so they shall com to the paxe/ & to receyue their maker/ to be
gyn a psalme/ & to stode in the quere/ And euer in all places
order keepynge/ ther shall no regarde had to age of yeres/ nor
ayge of yeres shalbe prejudiciall to the yonger beyng elder
in conuersion or profession/ for Samuell and Daniuell be
inge but children in ayge/ gaue iugement vpon them that
were their seniors. Therefore except oonly them the whiche
of a great auisemēt thabbasse hath preferred/ or elles degra
ded and put backe for certeyne causes/ al other as they come
into the religion/ so shall they be in ordre as thus. She that
cometh into the monasterye at .ii. of the clocke of the daye/
must knowe that she is Junioz to hir that came at on of the
clocke/ what so euer ayge or dignite she be of. And the yong
mynchins in all thinges muste be kept in discipline and fere
of all their susters. The yonger must do reuerēce to the elder
& the elder must loue the yonger/ In thir callyng or spekyng
oon to an other / It is not lefull for any / to name another by
hir ppre name / but the elders call their Juniozs susters/ the
Juniozs shall call the elders Dompnas/ whiche is to say da
mes a name of reuerēce & suffragēth/ Thabbasse stōdeth in
chrystes stede and shall be called Madame & abbasse/ & this
name she hath not of hir owne presūpcion and vsurpacion/
but for the honour & loue of chryste/ She must remēber & cō
sider/ & so behaue hir selfe/ that she be worthy suche honour/
wherfoeuer susters mete/ the yonger shall aske blessinge of the
elder/ If the elder passe by the yonger/ the yonger shall aryse/
& gyue hir place to sit. The yonger shall not plume to sit do w
ne except hir elder comaūde hir/ to thentēt that it may be ac

cōplyshed and fulfyllled amonges them / that is wrytten by
thapostell / euery oon pꝛeuentinge an other in doynge reuerē
ce. yonge children & damaselles in the quere and at the table
muste take and kepe their places / vnder fere and drede / And
withouth the quere & fro the table & elles where they muste
be kept vnder tutell and gouernance of their senioꝝ therto
assigned / vnto the tyme that they com to the ayge of vnder
standynge / and discrecion.

CThe. lxxiii. chapter treateth of the eleccio of thabbasse.

In the ordinance & makynge of thabbasse this consy
deracion muste allway be had / that is to say / that she
be made Abbasse / whome all the hole couent in the fere of
god / or a parte of theym / thoughe it be but small / beyng of
better counsell & zeile then the more parte is / woll chose. She
that shall be abbasse muste be chosen for the deserte & meri
tes of hir lyfe / hir doctrine and wisdom / yea & though she be
loweste in degre of all the couēt. And if all the couēt be gyue
to vices of oon assent (as god for bede) chose a person which
they thinke wyll concent & cōfoꝛme hir to their vices / & so to
to be of lyke mynde in lyue vnto them / if those vices in any
wyse com to the knowlege of the Bysshoppe / to whose di
ocesses that place belongeth / or elles be euident to abbasses
or other of their neyghbours / christen men they shall prohibe
yte & let the cōcēt of suche euyll religiose psons to take any
effecte. and they shal set & ordeyne oon / that is worthy to ha
ue the dispōsicio & administracio of the house of god / know
ynge well that for the sittynge a parte of an vnhabable pson /
& puidynge an habable pson / they shall receyue a good rewar
de if they doo it of pure mynde / & for the loue of god / As con
trary wyse / it is great syn if they be negligēt / & se not therto.
But it is to be remēbred that this maner of election was
made by seynt benet / by fore the ordinance of the se apostolyk
which now we be to be obserued & pferred to his institucio of

seynt benet. ¶ Thabbaſſe ones ordeyned muſt alway reme-
ber what charge ſhe hath take vppō hir / & to whō ſhe muſt
gyue accōptes of hir villicaciō & diſpōſacion. She muſt alſo
well knowe that it is hir dutie / more to doo good & profite
than to haue preheminence. Therefore ſhe muſt be well ter-
ned in the lawes of god & hir religion / & that ſhe vnderſtan-
de & be that perſon that can ſhe we & terbe the lawes / rules / &
cōſtitucions of the religion with ſuche hiſtores of holy ſcrip-
ture & ſeyntes lyues as be moſte expedient for the cōgrega-
cion. She muſt be chaſte / ſober / mercifull / & meke / and euer
in all hir werkes / let hir extoll a exalte mercy & equite a boue
Juſtice & ſeuerite / to the intent that ſhe may purchaſe that ſa-
me hir ſelfe. ¶ Let hir haſt vyce / & loue hir ſiſters / and in hir
correctiō ſhe muſt deale wyſely that it excede not / leſſe whi-
les ſhe coueyteth ouerſore / to rubbe a way the ruſte / the veſ-
ſell breke / She muſt all way conſyder hir owne fragilitie / &
remember / that a rede all though it be ſom what bruſed. yet
it is not to be vterly broken & deſtroyed. But by theſe ſay-
inges / we do not meane nor entende that ſhe ſuffer vices to
growe / but wyſely & with charyte ſhe ſhall cut them a way
as ſhe ſetbe to euery of hir ſiſters to be expedient / as we ha-
ue a forſayde / and ſhe muſt couet & effectually labour. mo-
re to be loued of hir ſiſters than to be dradde. She ſhall not
be full of haſtines / tro wbeloſe / ne of ſowre mode / or diſ-
playſant countenance / ſhe ſhall not be importune or intole-
rable nor obſtinate nor ſelfe wylled / ſhe ſhall not be itangled
with ieloſy / nor be to moche ſuſpicioſe / for ſuche a perſon is
neuer in quietneſſe / nor neuer takyth reſte. In hir cōmaūde-
mentes ſhe muſt be wyſe / prouident / & circumſpect. And all
ſuche labour or occupacion / as ſhe ſhall emoyne to any of hir
ſiſters / be it that it cōcerne the ſcrypte of god / or the buſines
of the worlde / ſhe muſt haue good diſcrecion & moderaciō /
callinge to hir mynde / the diſcrecion of holy Iacob ſayinge.
If I cauſe my flocke to ouerlaboure them ſelfe / they all ſhall
dye in oon daye. Therefore takynge theſe witneſſes / & other

mod examples of discrecion / moder of vertues / she shall so moderate all thynges / that stronge persones shall desyre to do the sayd labours and occupacions / & webe persons shall not refuse them. And specially she must regarde / that in all popntes she obserue this present rule / to thentet that for hir good adnustracion she may here of almyghty god / that the good seruante harde / whiche distributed the corne to his felowes i tyme / I tell you trouth (sayth the gospell) God shall for his dispensacion in fewe thynges / comitte vnto him the ouersyght of all his goodes.

The lxxv. chapter the wylth of the proueste or priores of the monastery.

Often tymes truly it happeneth / that through the makynge of a prouest or a prioress / greuous sclaunders & occasiouns of inconuenientes be rayled in monasterys / for whiles there be som inflate with the cursed spirite of pryde / supposinge them selfe to be secōde abbasses / takynge vppō them cruell ladyship / they noy the sclaunders / and make dyscencions and debates in the couent / and princypally in those places / where the prioress is made of the same bysshope / or of the same prelate whiche made thabbasse / whiche thinge howe farre out of reason it is / a man may sone perceyue / for eyn from the begynnyng of hir makynge and orderynge / & occasion is gyue vnto hir to be proude / whiles hir owne mynde doth make suggestion vnto hir / that she is clene deliuered / from the power of hir Abbasse / by cause she was made prioress of him / that thabbasse was made of. Where of be rayled Inuies / wrothes / strues / backbyting / hatred / dissencions / makynge & marrynge / discordes & disorders / And whiles thabbasse & the prioress be of contrary mynd / it foloweth necessarily / that whiles this dissenciō hangerth

there t wo so wiles muste be in Joperdy / And also they that
be vnder thā / whyles they flater the parties / do synne vnto
vtter pdiciō & dampnaciō / Of the Which iudie the mische-
fe pilsypally to wecheth thē / which were the causers / ayders /
& pētrators oꝝ assistēz / of the makynge of the sayd priorelle.
And therfore we se byfore our Ien that it is expediēt for the
conseruacion of pease & cheryte within the monastery / that
the ordināce of all thos officers of the monastery / hange in the
wyll & disposicion of the abbasse / And if it may be let all the
pfitte / vtile / charges / & administracions of the monastery / be
ordred as we haue abouelayde / by the deanes suche as the
abbasse woll assigne / & not by a priorelle. For whil the char-
ge is comitted to dyuerse psons / oon pson shall not fall into
pꝛyde. And if the place reget to haue a priorelle / oꝝ elles the
couent desyre it resonably / with humilite / & if thabbasse iu-
ge it to be expediēt / then whom so euer she doth chese with
the cōsailayll of hir susters dꝛedyng god / she may make hir
priorelle. The which priorelle shall do all suche thinges with
reuerēce / as be comitted & comāded vnto hir by hir abbas-
se / And nothings do contrary to the Will & ordināce of thab-
basse. For the more that she is pferred aboue other / the more
busy & diligētly she must obserue the pceptes of the rule. whē
the priorelle if she be espyed vicious oꝝ deceyued with the
spirite of pꝛyde / oꝝ elles be pꝛyde a breker oꝝ a dispiser of this
holy rule / let hir be warned with wordes vnto the. iiii. ty-
me. If she do not then amēde / let hir then be corrected as re-
gular disciplyne woll requyer. And if therby she doo not a-
mēde / let hir then be put out / & eiete of the office of the pri-
orelle / & a nother whiche is worthy hir roine / be surrogate
and succede. And if asturwarde amonge the couent she be
not quiete and obedient / let hir be expelled the monasterye
yet neuer the lesse to exclude the flame of enuy / & euyl wyll.
out of thabbasse mynde and so wile / let hir in this processe a-
penste the priorelle thinke that she muste gyue an accomp-
tes to god of all hir ingementes.

CThe. lvi. chapter treateth of the porters
of the monastery.

A the gate of the monasterie ther shall be set a wyse
holde suster / whiche can receyue & gyue an answere /
And she must be of suche grauite / that of lyklyhod / she shall
be no wanderer / which porter muste haue a lodge nygh the
gate / that comers may fynde oon all way present / of whom
they shall be answered / And as sone as any oon knocketh /
or elles a pore body callyth / she shall say deo gracias / or elles
som other good worde / And with all mekenes & fere of god
she shall gyue an answere by and by / with veruent charyte /
whiche porter if she nede helpe or cofort / shall haue with hir
a yonge suster. The monastery (if it may be) must be so byl
ded / that all necessaryes / that is to say / water / a mylle / a gara
dyne / a bakehouse / & other dyuerse occupacions may be ex
ercysed within the monastery / that the mynchins haue no
nede to wandre out of the monastery / for waderynge out of
there manastery in no wyse is expediēt for their soules / we
woll that this rule be often tymes red amonge the couent /
lesse any suster wolle excuse hir selfe by ignorance.

CThe. lrvii. chapter treateth of bretherne
sent forth in iorney.

Monkes that muste be sent out of the monasterie for
any busines / muste comende them selfe to the prayer
of all their bretherne / or elles of thabbot / And all way at the
laste or yson of the seruice of all myghty god / there shall be
had a remembrance for them that be absent. And brether
ne retorninge home from their iorney / that same day that
that they come home in / at every houre of the day whan the
seruice of god is sayde / shall prostrate their selfe vpon the
payment of the quere / And there shall besyre the prayers of
all their bretherne for their excesses / done in their absences /

lesse by chaunce they haue offeſed by the way / other in ſeing
oꝝ heyrnge of any euyll thynges / oꝝ idle ſpeche. Neither any
of them ſhall preſume to tell any maner of thyng that they
ſawe oꝝ harde without the monaſtery / foꝝ of that comethe
mouche diſtruccion / And if any preſume to do it / let him be
punyſhed by regular diſcipline / In lyke wyſe alſo ſhall he
be punyſhed / that pſumeth eyther to goo out of the cloyſter
of the monaſtery / eyther to goo any whither / oꝝ elles do any
maner of thyng / be it neuer ſo lytle without the comaun-
dement of the abbot. ¶ All be it that the matter of this cha-
piter cannot to wche any minchins / by cauſe they ought not
foꝝ any cauſe / be it neuer ſo great to be ſet out of the monaſte-
ry / yet be cauſe we woll coceyle no thyng of the rule from
theym / we haue therfoꝝe translate this chapter in maner
and fourme ſollowynge.

**¶ The. lviij. chapter treateth what is to be doone
if impoſſible thynges be inioyned to a ſuſter.**

If fortune / that to any ſuſtre any greuouſe oꝝ impoſſi-
ble thynges be comitted to be doon / ſhe muſte yet ac-
cept the comaundement with all mekenes & obedience / & if ſhe
ſe that the weyght of that charge / farre paſſe the meaſure of
hir power / let hir ſhewe the cauſes why ſhe may not do it to
hir ſoueraigne ſobzely / paciētly / & i tyme / not with a pꝛow-
de ſtomake with ſtōdyng / oꝝ ageynſayenge it. And if aftur
ſhe hathe thus ſhewed hir cauſe to hir ſoueraigne / it be
thought to the ſame that the ſayd inuencion oꝝ comaunde-
ment / ought yet to be executed and doon / then let that ſuſter
well knowe / that it is expedient foꝝ hir to do it / & truſtyng
to the helpe of god / lat hir charitably obey.

**¶ The. lxiij. chapter comaundeth that oon preſume not
in the monaſtery to defende a nother.**

Chefely mynchins muste be warre / that oon of theym
presume not / for any maner of occasion / or in any ma-
ner or wyse / to defende a nother in hir office in the monaste-
ry / yea all thowgh they be neuer so nygh in kynrede / This
thinge in no maner of wyse may be presumed of mynchins.
for of it comunely spryngeth moste greuous occasions of
flaunders and debates and other inconviniens. And if any
oon doo offende in this / let hir be more sharply punished.

Che. lxx. chapter comaundeth that none
presume to bete a nother.

Al occasion of presumption must be a voyded in the
monastery / wherfore we make and ordeyne (sayth
seynt Benet) that it be not lefull to any suster to excoicate or
bete any of hir sisters / hir oonly except / to whom power is
comitted of thabbasse so for to doo / They that both amysse
muste be rebuked oppnyly / before all their sisters / to thentet
that other may be affrayde therby. **C**To children vnto the
tyme they be .xv. yerres of age / diligent of discipline / tutell
and sure keepynge / muste begyuen of all their sisters / & that
with all measure and reason. for she that ether presumeth
to punishe / or stryke any suster of a grutter ayge the .xv. with
out the comaundement of thabbasse / or elles is ouer sharpe
or hasty with the children without discrecion / She must be
punished by regular discipline / for it is witten. That that
thou wylt not haue doon to thy selfe / do thou to none other.

Che. lxxi. chapter sheweth that sisters be
obedient eche to other.

The vertue of obedience / is not oonly to be shewed &
exhibite vnto thabbasse of all the mynchins / But all
so all the sisters / must shew obedience eche to other / knowi-
nge that by this way of obediens / they shall goo to god / Ther-
fore the comaundementes of thabbasse or prioress / euer pfer

red and set afore/to the which we wyll no priuate commaundement be preferred after them/euery Junior shall obey his Senior/with all cheryte and diligence. And if any be founde cōtencious/let her be rebuked. ¶ If any suster for any cause / be it neuer so lytle / be rebuked in any maner of wyse of the abbasse/or if any that is superior vnto hir / or elles if she vnderstonde the mynde of any of hir superiors some what angrey or moued ayenste hir / all thoug hit be but lytle / by & by without any taryenge/so longe shall she prostrate vppon the grounde/byfore the fete of the same superior/doinge satisfaction / vnto the tyme that the same anger or mouynge be heled with a benediction/which thinge if any oon refuse to do/let hir haue bodely punishement / or elles if she be stubborne/let hir be expelled the monastery.

**¶ The lxxii. chapter treateth of good zeale
whiche nymchins ought to haue.**

AS there is an zeale of bitternes/the which disseuerith man from god/and ledith vnto hell/ryght so there is a good zeale/whiche disseuerith man from vices/ and ledeth man vnto god/and to euerlastynge lyfe. Therefore this zeale must nymchins exerceyle with most feruent loue/that is to say/that eche preuent other in doinge reuerence. They must suffre moste patiently the infirmities of their sisters/be the infirmities of body or of condicions/They must shewe obedience/as euery of them wolde be the furste to do obedience and in maner stryue amonges them selfe/who shalbe most obedient. None of them shall pursue the thinge that she iudgeth pfytable for hir selfe/ But rather that / that she iudgeth to be pfitable to a nother. They that shall shewe charite as sisters ought/with pure and vnfeygned loue. They muste drede god. They muste loue their abbasse/in pure and meke cheryte. They shall preferre nothing vnto churche. who bringe vs to gydder to euerlastynge lyfe. Amen.

**¶ The laste chapter sheweth all obseruacion
of Justice is cōteigned in this rule.**

E haue wrytten & declared this rule (sayth seynt Be-
net) to shewēt that obseruinge the same in monaster-
res/ we may shewe our selfe / to haue som what / ey-
ther of the honesty of goode maners / or els at the leest soom
begynnyng of goode conuersacyon. But furthermore they
that effectually / and spedely pursue to haue the veray pfecti-
on of goode lyuinge / to theym be necessarye the doctrynes
of holy fathers / the keepyng of the whiche doctrynes / byn-
geth a man to the higheste degre of perfectiō / for what bo-
ke / or what sentēce of the auctoꝝyte of almyghty god / of the
olde or of the newe testament / is not the mooste streyght rule
& directyue of the lyfe of man / Or what boke of holy catho-
lyque faders doth not declare the strayght way / & euyn cure
se / wherby we may com to oure maker. Also the collacions
and sermons of faders / and their lyues and ordinaunces / yea
and also the rule of our holy fader seynt Basyle: what other
thinge be they: But for the well lyuyuge and obedient mō-
kes and munchins / examples and instrumentes of vertues
But to vs that be slothfull / euyl lyuers / and neglygent per-
sons / they be shame and confusyon. ¶ Therefore (sayth seynt
Benet) what so euer thou art / that makeste spede / to warde
the heuēly cōtray / performe thou by the helpe of chryste this
small rule wrytten by vs / for the begynnyng of good lyue /
and religiose cōuersacion / And then in cōclusyon / thorough
the pfection of all myghty god / thou mayst attayne to ferre
higher steppes of doctrine / & vertues / wherof we haue ma-
de mencion byfoze.

¶ Finis.

**¶ Imprinted (by the cōmaūdemēt of the reuerend fa-
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